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CURTIS' HISTORY
OF THE



ROYAL
IRISH CONSTABULARY



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Excellence



THE HISTORY
OF THE
Royal Irish Constabulary

BY
ROBERT CURTIS

COUNTY INSPECTOR, R.I.C.

Author of "The Irish Police Officer;" "Trial of Captain Alcohol," &c.

Second Edition.

DUBLIN:
McGLASHAN & GILL, 50 UPPER SACKVILLE-ST.
LONDON: SIMPKIN & CO.

1871.



Dedicated

BY PERMISSION

TO HIS GRACE

THE

DUKE OF ABERCORN. K.G.

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PREFACE.



IT appears to us that the time has arrived when a complete History of the Irish Constabulary, not only may be, but ought to be written. Many of the younger members of the force—indeed many, perhaps, of those who can scarcely be called the younger members—know comparatively little of the origin and infancy of the force to which they belong. Many of those who joined it along with ourselves have left it altogether, and lost all interest in it except their quarter day's pension; while some—alas! not a few of our contemporaries—have passed away to that country where experience was born of God, and which no Act of Parliament can alter or 'amend.'

When witnessing the ceremony some time ago which took place at the Dépôt—that of decorating

some of the officers and men who had more particularly distinguished themselves upon the occasion of the late Fenian outbreak—as we gazed upon the many youngsters around us in their gay uniforms, our thoughts involuntarily passed back to a period of upwards of forty years before, and we wondered how many of those joyous young men would arrive at even the position which we then occupied in the force—and when!

The contrast of the force then drawn up before us from that which we had first joined was so forcible, that the thought struck us, it might not be uninteresting to trace its history from the origin, bringing it, step by step, from its birth, through its infancy, to its youth, and up to the stalwart manhood which at that moment it could boast.

When we began the task, we confess we did not anticipate that it would occupy more than an inconsiderable number of pages in a pamphlet form; but as we progressed, some subjects, so intimately connected with the history of the constabulary, presented themselves—subjects which could not fail to interest the general public, as well as the men themselves, that they fell into their places almost as a matter of course.

But it is not our intention to write a long preface. We have endeavoured to be as concise as could well

be, coupled with completeness of the subject. One thing we will assert,—that we have written nothing with a desire to assimilate anything we have said to the views of any party or person. Upwards of forty years' service may give us some claim to a certain degree of competency for the task which we have undertaken.

We have endeavoured to counterbalance a certain technicality inseparable from such a work, by the introduction of some of the most interesting incidents of the periods at which changes were made in the constabulary organization, and we hope we have not been unsuccessful in imparting a general interest to the subject.





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THE HISTORY OF THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY.

CHAPTER I.

POSITION OF MATTERS PREVIOUS TO THE FORMATION OF THE CONSTABULARY.

NEARLY half a century is a long time to look back upon, in describing the first formation of an institution ; nevertheless, the origin, progress, and maturity of the Irish constabulary can readily be traced.

It will not be necessary to enter into a minute detail of the several attempts which were made, from time to time, by the legislature, to form a system of police calculated to meet the requirements of the state of Ireland, at a period of from twenty to thirty years previous to the formation of the Irish constabulary. To give a short summary of the different Acts of Parliament which were passed with the pro-

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fessed object of preserving the peace, and a few of their leading provisions, will be sufficient—indeed one of them was universally known as ‘the Peace Preservation Act.’

In 1787, an Act was passed—the 27th of Geo. III., ch. 40, entitled, ‘An Act for the better Execution of the Law, and the Preservation of the Peace within Counties at large.’ This Act empowered the Lord Lieutenant to appoint a chief constable to each one or more baronies; while the grand juries had power given to them to appoint sixteen sub-constables to each of the same districts; and it was a provision in the Act that they should be Protestants. They were entitled to a sum of three-pence a mile for the conveyance of all prisoners whom they might apprehend, from the place of arrest to the county gaol. A like sum was also to be paid to any persons assisting them in that duty—provided that they were Protestants! How vastly for the better all that has been changed since then; now three-fourths of the Irish constabulary are Roman Catholics.

The provisions of the above Act were not generally carried out in the counties, many of them having failed to adopt them. It was followed, in 1792, by the 32nd of Geo. III., cap. 16, entitled ‘An Act for regulating the Office of Constable, and for the better enforcing the Process of Criminal Law in certain Parts of the Kingdom.’ This Act gave the power to grand juries to appoint a certain number of additional constables to each district. The men appointed under both these Acts were those known under the name of

'baronial constables,' afterwards familiarly termed '*Old Barnys*,' from old Barny M'Keown, undoubtedly the most celebrated man of his class. They wore no uniform, were under no supervision, subject to no discipline or control whatever, and followed their usual occupations meanwhile, whatever they might be. Their principal *duties* dwindled down to that of searching for stolen goods, as men so constituted were manifestly unable to cope with riot and disorder. At that early period, even this simple process of the law was very carelessly, and indeed often illegally, performed; and it is a well authenticated fact that, upon one occasion, one of these 'barony constables' had been known to *lend a search warrant* to one of his comrades in an adjoining district, to search for stolen *turnips*, which had originally been issued to himself to search for *timber*. Indeed the practice was not uncommon, if any delay was likely to arise; and the peasantry had an idea that a search-warrant was absolute, and gave the 'barony constables' a general power to search wherever they pleased, on all occasions of stolen property.

This state of things soon proved the total inadequacy of such a police for the requirements of the country, and in 1814, the 54th of Geo. III., cap. 131, commonly called, 'the Peace Preservation Act,' was passed. This was a very vigorous measure. It empowered the Lord Lieutenant to proclaim any county or city, or any portion of any county in Ireland, to be in a state of disturbance; and at once to appoint a chief magistrate, chief constable, and fifty sub-constables to

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such county or district, for the preservation of the peace. The chief magistrate was bound to reside within the county or district for which he was appointed. And the local magistrates were obliged to transmit *to him* all examinations, informations, or intelligence, which they might receive of any offence committed, or *intended to be committed*, within their jurisdiction. This chief magistrate was indeed absolute, and, to a great extent, superseded the powers and functions of the local magistrates, the constables appointed under the Act not being obliged to attend to them without his orders.

The above Act, although not altogether unattended with a certain share of success in the preservation of the peace, was by no means perfect, and experience proved it to be open to many objections. The very existence of the posts of the chief magistrate and his men, depended upon the existence, at the same time, of riot and disorder. It was natural, therefore, that their zeal was not of such a character as totally to sweep from the face of the country that which it was their interest, to a certain extent at least, to keep alive. Much money, too, passed through their hands for *private* information, for which they were never obliged to account, and for which an odd conviction at assizes or quarter sessions was a receipt in full. This led many unscrupulous men actually to induce the unwary to commit crime, that they might afterwards give information against them, for the sake of the government rewards. Who has not heard of Paddy M'Cue, who at that period made a trade of

this detestable practice, and was subsequently convicted of the dishonourable treachery? But he was not the only one who, for a time, made a livelihood by such means; others there were who 'took a leaf out of his book,' until the practice became a by-word of reproach.

We may here introduce an amusing episode, giving a description of the heterogeneous manner in which the force appointed under this Act used to 'turn out for duty' at assizes, and we cannot do the scene more justice than by giving it in the words of our brother officer, who was an eye-witness, and who has kindly furnished us with the materials:—

'I was standing,' he says, 'at an assize time, in the street of Maryborough, near the hotel, when I heard the sound of horsemen rapidly approaching, and suddenly a body of forty men came sweeping round the corner at a sharp trot, scarcely giving me time to get out of their way. They drew up opposite the hotel, under the command of a Major Nicholson (then late of the Wicklow Militia), who was commandant of so much of the peace preservation force, as were then in the province of Leinster. This officer wore a dark blue jacket, closely braided in front, with round, black silk cord, and small black buttons, red cuffs and collar, red and gold lace girdle, and tall beaver cap and feathers, with crescent, Turkish-shaped scimitar. Of the men, ten wore scarlet cloaks over their uniform, reaching down over their horses' tails, brass helmets, and plumes, "Waterloo" on the helmets! ten were in hussar uniforms, with loose jackets slung

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over the shoulder, hussar saddles, with sheep-skins, &c. Ten others were in a uniform which I cannot now describe, but sitting *behind them* on pads were *voltigeurs*, with short rifles resting on the thigh. These *voltigeurs* were made to dismount and remount occasionally by their eccentric commander. This motley force was brought in for duty, attending upon the judges, escorting prisoners, &c. They were mounted on splendid horses, several of which were worth (present value) from £50 to £100, as at that time the finest horses perhaps in the world were in this country.

‘This eccentric major, with whom I was personally acquainted, attended with this favourite “body guard,” at most of the fairs, where faction-fights, resulting so often in loss of life, were frequent: and dashing in at a charge, the scarlet cloaks floating in the wind, caused the country people preparing for the fray to run in all directions. At other times I have seen him in a light chaise, with four horses and postillions, enter the town at a gallop, having two out-riders in front and two behind, with their rifles well in hand—one of which rifles I have to this day. At this time, besides a large body of foot police, there were from fifty to sixty men, styled “dragoon police,” splendidly mounted (many of the horses *first-class hunters*) with a regular bugler, stationed at Rathdowney, who occasionally traversed the roads, that the people might see they were ready for action if required.

‘This poor, eccentric commandant has long since

passed away, and most probably all the "Waterloo corps" attached to him. At the period adverted to he had much influence with the government; and it was said they gave him the "Waterloo helmets" and scarlet cloaks, as well as the hussar uniforms and appointments. With the former he hoped to frighten the people into obedience and fear of the law. He was ultimately displaced (high time for him) by a Major Powel, who became inspector-general of Leinster, under the first Constabulary Act, and who, retiring subsequently, died colonel of the 40th regiment, in 1827."

Soon after this period circumstances arose, which proved that even 'the peace preservation force' was totally inadequate to meet the emergencies which were every day arising for an effective remedy.

After the termination of the French war, in 1815, thousands of the British army were disbanded, and numbers of them being Irishmen, returned as idlers—some of them with small pensions—to their native land. The following summer of 1816 was, perhaps, the wettest which can be remembered before or since. The wheat crop all over Ireland was so smutted, malted, and damaged, that a sound loaf of Irish flour could not be procured in any part of the kingdom; and it was a common trick amongst school-boys, of which the author of this history was then a very small unit, to pull the soft out of the bread with which they had been served, but which they could not eat, and throw it against the wall, where it stuck like putty! The

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potatoes, too, which formed the poor man's principal support, were, from the constant rain, no better than balls of soap; whole acres of them in the low lands were flooded, and could not be come at, if even fit for use. After a while some relief came from England (which had not fared much better itself) and from America; but malty bread, and unwholesome substitutes, had done their work upon the poor, and produced in the following year, 1817, a fearful amount of fever and dysentery. The suffering and poverty caused by two such years, with hundreds of disbanded soldiers, ill calculated from their previous lives for anything but idleness, turned loose amongst the population, with more indigenous material, soon produced formidable disturbances; and, in 1818, most portions of the south of Ireland were in a state of turbulence and disorder, where '*carding*' and '*half roasting*' were sometimes conceded as *mercies*, instead of sudden death.

For three or four years from that period, 'the peelers' were allowed to cope with these 'untoward circumstances,' and, perhaps, they did their best; but chief magistrates, chief and other constables, sheriffs, local magistrates, and special constables to boot, failed to restore peace; and it is not to be wondered at that the force—if such it could be called—appointed under that Act, found no great favour with either the public or with the government. It was not their interest to be altogether successfully efficient, and they never became popular with the people; while they kept the authorities in many instances 'in hot water.' They

continued, however, to eke out an unsatisfactory existence for some time after the Act was passed, which created the present constabulary force, to which this history, with some pride in the contrast, can now introduce the reader.





CHAPTER II.

FIRST FORMATION OF THE CONSTABULARY.

IN 1822, the 3rd of Geo. IV., cap. 103, was passed, empowering the Lord Lieutenant to appoint a chief constable in each barony, and to require, by proclamation, the magistrates of each county to appoint a limited number of constables for the same; that was to say, sixteen to each barony within the county. The chief, and other constables so appointed, were to be under the supervision of four inspectors-general, one for each province. This act superseded the power of the grand juries to appoint constables; and under it the present constabulary force was first inaugurated, but not as now constituted. It did not, however, repeal the 54th of Geo. III., commonly called 'the Peace Preservation Act,' which was for some time longer left in operation.

This Act gave to the whole of Ireland a combined force of 313 chief constables, and only 5,008 con-

stables, in the following proportions, calculated on the number of baronies in each county :

| | | Chief Constables. | Constables. |
|------------------------------|---|-------------------|-------------|
| To the Province of Leinster, | - | 114 | 1824 |
| " " Ulster, | - | 74 | 1184 |
| " " Munster, | - | 67 | 1072 |
| " " Connaught, | - | 58 | 928 |
| Totals, | | 313 | 5008 |

Contrasting these numbers with those of the present day, it will be seen how very much below the mark they must have been in the lower ranks for the requirements of the country.

The above force was not organized all at once, but by counties, according to proclamation in the *Dublin Gazette*, calling on one county at one time, and on another county at another, postponing some in which the Peace Preservation Act was still permitted to work.

The uniform of this new force was a green frock-coat and trowsers, and shako cap for dress, with a soft cloth cap, and short or slop jacket for undress, with Russia duck trowsers for summer. They were armed with a short carbine—flint locks in those days, but subsequently superseded by those with percussion locks. The men were drilled at the head-quarters of provinces, prior to being sent out to their several counties ; and this preparatory training generally occupied a period of about three months. The above Act also provided for the purchase of horses and accoutrements for a mounted force, to be distributed

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in certain proportions with the infantry to the head stations of the several districts.

This force, and the peace preservation force, continued to act at the same time, but independently of each other, and under totally distinct control; the existence of the one depending upon riot and disturbance, while the superiority of the other was made manifest in the additional security which was afforded to life and property, the gradual decrease of crime, and in the influence which it soon began to exercise upon the people generally, as its protective and friendly nature became better understood.

With respect to 'the peace preservation' party, it will be unnecessary to have anything more to do; merely observing, that it could scarcely be expected that a force so constituted could work well, or give satisfaction to the public generally. It was completely under the direction of the 'chief magistrates' appointed under the Act, and it was entirely independent of the local magistrates. Each chief magistrate was a sort of Robinson Crusoe, so far as being 'monarch of all he surveyed;' and, certainly 'his right there was none to dispute.' Even two different chief magistrates in the same county—which not unfrequently happened—took different views of the law and acted upon totally different systems, giving rise to many inconsistencies and much inconvenience. As regarded the constabulary, there was, for some time, very much the same independence and variety of guidance; each inspector-general acting in his own province upon his own responsibility and judgment

without a general head ; and differences and alterations occasionally arose from the fact that, the magistrates at quarter sessions asserted a right to a voice in the management of this new force, to which they unquestionably had the power to appoint the men, but which right of management the inspectors-general repudiated altogether, beyond the mere power to appoint.

The first four inspectors-general of provinces were, Major Warburton for Connaught, Major Wilcox for Munster, Major Powell for Leinster, and Major Darcy for Ulster. It will not be necessary, however, to enumerate the several persons who, from time to time, succeeded to these important positions as vacancies occurred. Suffice it to say that, at the passing of the Act, in 1836, which consolidated the force into one uniform body, Major Warburton was the only one of the above who retained office.

This system—or rather want of system—surprising to say, lasted for nearly thirteen years ; and it is no small praise to the gentlemen who severally filled the office of inspectors-general during that period, to be enabled with truth to say, that each in himself, although the details of their operations may have been essentially different, had effected a vast improvement in the peace and tranquillity of the country, and in the social condition of the lower orders, as regarded crime of all denominations.

Notwithstanding, however, the success of the constabulary force under the variety of modes by which it was set in motion and worked, the want of a uniform system of management began to be felt by

the authorities at 'The Castle.' The rule which suited one province did not apply to another ; they were more like four separate bodies of police than one force appointed under the same Act ; there were too many differences and inconsistencies in the rules of the force to act satisfactorily as a whole ; men transferred from one province to another—which often happened—were completely puzzled in their new position. 'They did not do so in Leinster, where I was stationed.' 'In Ulster I find that I am censured for what I was obliged to do in Connaught, where I came from.' 'In Munster such a thing was never heard of, *I* know.' Such, or some such observations, invariably followed soon after the arrival of a man transferred from one province to another.

It was most surprising that this want of uniformity in a body, which should be one and the same in all its rules and ramifications, was permitted to remain so long unremedied. Thirteen years, however, of what may be fairly termed *successful bungling*, at last opened the eyes of the government to the imperative necessity that existed for re-organization ; and, in 1836, a vast and important change was made by the passing of the 6th of Wm. IV., cap. 13. This Act did away with what was found still to be a piece of apprenticeship work, and a 'superior article,' capable of taking the high polish which it has at present attained, was turned out by a 'master hand'—a well-deserved term, when it is recollected that the late Thomas Drummond, familiarly known in the force as T. D., was the principal artificer.



CHAPTER III.

OFFICIAL CHARACTER OF MR. DRUMMOND.

THERE can hardly be a more favourable, or appropriate portion of our history than the present, to do justice, so far as our poor words can, to the memory of Mr. Drummond, more particularly as connected with the reorganization of the constabulary, and the effects which his clear-sightedness and promptitude produced, under the above Act.

We are indebted for our information upon this part of our subject to M'Lennan's *Memoir of Thomas Drummond*, a book which should be in the hands of every true lover of Ireland.

'The feeling was general' (we are now quoting from M'Lennan) 'in 1835, that something, or several things should be done for Ireland. The state of parties in Parliament made it probable that something would be done, and certain that several things would be attempted. The Whigs owed their resumption of office, as they were for years to owe its continuance, to the

support of the Irish liberal members. The exigencies of their position thus urged them to efforts on behalf of Ireland. They soon announced a new *regime* for Ireland. They set to themselves the task of amending by legislation some of the social, and some of the most important political institutions of that country. They sent over to it a government directed to administer its affairs on new principles. The three leading figures in the administration established in Ireland to carry out the new *regime* were, the Viceroy, Lord Mulgrave, afterwards Lord Normanby; the Chief Secretary, Lord Morpeth; and Mr. Under-Secretary Drummond.

‘The Viceroy is described by Dr. Madden as in figure, accomplishments, habits, and talents, as the nearest approximation ever witnessed to a Hibernian Viceroy. He was gay, brilliant, and dashing, always setting something on foot to amuse and gratify the public, who were caught at first sight by his flashy and semi-military appearance, as he gracefully curvetted through the streets. He was the politest statesman, the most gentlemanly governor, and the most urbane minister of his age.

‘It was a fall from this to the highest tribute of all, which was chaffingly paid him—that he looked and bore himself like a true Milesian, “the model of a superfine Paddy.” A triumphal procession through the country, in the course of which he liberated a vast number of prisoners from the gaols, and everywhere received ovations as the deliverer of the people, was in keeping with the character above depicted. It was an act of dexterous, though questionable policy,

which for a time gave a favourable turn to popular sentiments.

‘Lord Morpeth, who afterwards became Earl of Carlisle, is better known. He combined fair business talents with scholarly acquirements and literary tastes. Accomplished, able, and amiable, he was liked by the Irish, at once as a man and a minister.

‘Mr. Drummond was the subordinate of these noble men, with which fact is connected the chief difficulty in dealing with this portion of his life.’

The three figures are touched off by Dr. Madden, in which he speaks of ‘the *savoir faire* of Lord Normanby, the virtue of Lord Morpeth, and the admirable powers, and not less admirable virtue of the incomparable Drummond.’

The three are also brought together by Mr. Shiel, in his speech on the corn and tariff bills of 1846. Contrasting the Normanby administration with the Tory governments that followed and preceded it, ‘I will show you,’ he said, ‘that a government conducted on different principles has been productive of peace. Let your government and Lord Normanby’s be compared. Lord Normanby, beloved by the Irish people, was Lord Lieutenant ; the Chief Secretary, an object to all who knew him, of affectionate respect, was Lord Morpeth. You, Mr. Speaker, will pardon a breach of order, when, for the purpose of a panegyric, it is almost sufficient to give utterance to a name. The Under-Secretary was Mr. Drummond, who, though not born in Ireland, was more than an Irishman in his love of Ireland, and who at his own, and his last request, lies

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buried in the land for which he died, of intellectual toil.'

'Like the Viceroy, Drummond won popularity in Ireland, but in a different manner. The Irish, it has been said, knew not how they loved him until they lost him.'

We were much gratified to find in M'Lennan's book many generous and well-paid tributes to the noble genius of Drummond, and of his devotion to Ireland, emphatically the land of his adoption, by our present Under-Secretary, General Larcom, who has been largely quoted, and than whom a more competent authority can hardly be found. M'Lennan quotes also extensively from Dr. Madden, and Miss Martineau, whose experience of Mr. Drummond's character, and abilities seems to be scarcely second to that of his intimate and early acquaintance—indeed we believe we may say at one time his brother officer, General Larcom.

M'Lennan says, 'The thing which gave Drummond superior fitness for the duties which the new Irish government had undertaken, was his intimate knowledge of the country and the people. Both of these were well known to him when he went to Ireland, in 1835. Eleven years before, he had with Colley, traversed the whole land. In the years from 1824 to '30, he enjoyed special opportunities of studying the character and condition of the peasantry. Nearly the whole of the years 1828 and '29 he spent in Ireland, passing the summer months in the country, and the winter months in Dublin. In town and country he

must have been a frequent listener to discussions on Irish politics. Animated as he was with strong feelings in favour of popular claims, we need not ask which section of the Irish people had his sympathies.'

The survey afforded excellent opportunities of becoming acquainted with the peasantry. He availed himself of these, and got to know the people well. According to Dr. Madden, no one ever knew them better. He says, 'It was the rare union of thought and feeling, of a generous nature, with a scientific mind, that won for Drummond the mingled admiration and esteem of so many of the best men of the two nations of Ireland. It was this union also that enabled him to acquire his unrivalled knowledge of every class in Ireland. It is possible that he may have been equalled, but he certainly never was surpassed in his knowledge of Irishmen, considered in their social relations. Lying on the mountain side at night, in some savage wild of Antrim or Tyrone, with the stars of heaven over his head, and no vestiges of civilization in the neighbourhood, he would "draw out" the Irish peasants who came to the engineer's station from motives of curiosity, or the hope of casual employment. No Cockney impudence, no sneer of superiority, was ever visible in Drummond, as he listened to the vague and melancholy narration of some tale of suffering, in which, perhaps, the faults of the narrator were as manifest as those of the local tyrant whom he cursed.

'Unlike most of his companions, Drummond preferred to see the darker and more startling part of the

Irish character, rather than its joyousness and levity. The jokes and funny stories, and the droll sayings he left to be enjoyed by those who were pleased to think that the Irishman was only a fierce Joe Millar, with a furious brogue. He had an eye for nature, and liked to see the original character of the Irish—its wildness and romance, so congenial with the scenery of the Irish landscape—its dark spirit of brooding over wrong—its savage spirit of revenge for personal injury or insult—its political sensibility, and its preference for the illusive and fanciful over the actual and true. Drummond liked to see all this with his own eyes, and to ponder on it, as he found this romantic disposition united with such an exquisite perception for the droll and ridiculous. He saw, he studied, and with his genial sympathy he *felt* the Irish character and nature. And so, when he came to Ireland in 1835, as Under-Secretary, he entered on the duties of his office with a better preparation for his task than any of his predecessors ever exhibited. Having acquired a practical knowledge of the arts by which men are governed in these kingdoms, he went to Ireland, in the full possession of physical energy and mental vigour, and with a mind filled with zeal to perform service to Ireland. He believed that government might effect wonders in Ireland, and he entered upon his duties with a head teeming with projects of reform, and a heart overflowing with affection for the Irish people.

‘Drummond was distinguished by another quality, which made him superior to his nominal superiors in the government of Ireland. It was his power of work

—a faculty for transacting business, which was altogether extraordinary.’

“To one like him,” says Larcom, “to will and to do were one. Such was his power of concentration, that he could fix the whole force of his mind on any subject in discussion, to the utter exclusion of every other. Whether the subject were great or small, his mind appeared to grasp, and could not be diverted from it.”

Doctor Madden again says—‘It mattered little who was the Lord Lieutenant, provided he had Drummond as Under-Secretary.’ The fact is, the subordinate office, always a most important one, became, while Drummond filled it, one of the most important in the government. The Under-Secretary’s influence extended beyond the sphere of his duties, to almost every branch of the Irish administration. ‘There is no survivor of that administration,’ says Miss Martineau, ‘who will not eagerly assent to the avowal, that one member—Mr. Drummond—was the mind and soul of it.’ The assent has been given in general terms, as amply as the warmest admirer of Drummond could wish. No proposition, indeed, could well be more strongly asserted or more readily admitted.

But we must not wander from our object, in our admiration of Mr. Drummond’s general character. It was of his connexion with the constabulary that we were about to speak, and here we must quote again from M’Lennan’s Memoir :—

‘The whole of the agencies,’ he says, ‘for repressing crime in Ireland, in 1835, were in a high degree inefficient. The police were insufficient, partly from

defects in their organization, and partly because they had never been properly handled. In the division in Dublin Castle, the control of the constabulary was left to the Under-Secretary, even when the Chief Secretary was in Ireland. In this field, then, Drummond appears as a principal.

‘He found the constabulary in a very inefficient state,’ says General Larcom. ‘By his power of organization, and administrative skill, he converted it into the most efficient police in Europe. It became under his hands an almost perfect machine, which, like a delicate musical instrument, responded at once from the remotest part of Ireland, to his touch in Dublin Castle.’

Before Mr. Drummond was a month in the country as Under-Secretary, the state of the police force in the City of Dublin made plain to him the necessity of its being remodelled, and he at once brought in a bill in parliament for that purpose.

At the same time that the above Dublin Police Bill was introduced, in the session of 1835 there was also proposed a general Irish Constabulary Bill, prepared upon the basis of one which had been drawn up under the chief secretaryship of Mr. Littleton. This bill passed the Commons, but was rejected by the Lords, ‘whereby,’ says Drummond, ‘the benefit which would have been derived from it, was delayed for a whole year.’ The same bill, with some alterations by Mr. Drummond, was introduced in 1836, and passed both Houses.

In the meantime, Drummond addressed himself,

with the force at his disposal, to the work that had to be done, and had almost suppressed the faction-fights before the new police became available.

‘I ought to mention,’ says Drummond, in his evidence before the Roden Committee, ‘that it was a practice, at one time not uncommon, to draw the police from the fairs, with a view to prevent collision with the people; and when the order that they should attend was given, I received a representation from Sir John Harvey, the provincial inspector-general for Leinster, begging that the subject might be well considered before the order was sent out, for he felt that very serious consequences might result from it, the policy having been to withdraw the men out of sight, and leave the people to fight among themselves unrestrained, rather than risk the loss of life by collision with the constabulary.’

The consequence of this remonstrance was the issuing of a general order, in the beginning of 1836, for the suppression of these riots and faction-fights. In June 1836, the substance of a series of minutes, written on the different cases that had occurred since Drummond became Under-Secretary, were embodied in a general order to the constabulary by Colonel Shaw Kennedy, who became inspector-general under the new Act.

After the new Act and regulations came into force, Mr. Drummond continued to retain the active management and superintendence of the constabulary. In dealing with the factions, his policy was to accumulate the police in such strength at the point of

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expected conflict, as to put resistance out of the question. The result was, that they usually dispersed the factions, and arrested the ring-leaders without opposition. The stipendiary magistrates, introduced by the Act, greatly facilitated their effective employment. The efforts of the constabulary were also aided by a clause inserted for the purpose in the Spirit License Act, of 1836, which gave the magistrates the power of closing, at an early hour the booths at fairs. In 1838, however, the inspector-general, dissatisfied with his subordinate relation to it, resigned his office. One of his complaints was, that the stipendiary magistrates did not correspond with him, but direct with the Under-Secretary, whereby the practical control and disposal of the force was taken out of his hands. On some occasions he was unaware of the movements of the police, until he received reports of their having executed the orders of the government.'

With respect to the famous aphorism enunciated by Mr. Drummond in his letter to the Tipperary magistrates, 'that property had its duties as well as its rights,' although it might appear inexcusable to pass it over altogether, yet we shall scarcely more than allude to it. At the time it created an excitement such as so few, simple, and undeniable words of pure truth, had never before created. A doubt was for some time cast upon the fact of Drummond being the author of the aphorism in question, which doubt first originated in Lord Normanby's speech upon the address, at the opening of the following

session of parliament. In alluding to that letter, he is represented to have used the rather remarkable words: 'I dictated and directed a letter to be sent,' which expression was laid hold of as a foundation for attributing the direct authorship of the aphorism to the Marquis of Normanby himself; while others maintained that it was a mere official expression, used by him as head of the responsible government.

A discussion of nearly fourteen pages upon the subject of its authorship, will be found in M'Lennan's memoir, in which it appears to have been attributed to one or two others, as well as to either Mr. Drummond or Lord Normanby. The result of the proof brought forward in this discussion is, in our opinion, clearly to establish Mr. Drummond as the sole author. But admitting the point of the aphorism at the time, and upon the occasion when it was used, and to whom it was addressed, we confess that the words in themselves are so plain, simple, and undeniable—so manifestly just, that we cannot admit Mr. Drummond's character for astuteness in any way depends upon the proof of his authorship.

We may now close this chapter, which we find was more intimately connected with our subject, than we had almost at first anticipated.





CHAPTER IV.

COLLISIONS WITH THE CONSTABULARY—THEIR CAUSES AND RESULTS.

BUT before we proceed with our notice of the constabulary, as constituted under Mr. Drummond's Act, of 1836, it may not be uninteresting to devote a chapter to a previous period, when they were put upon a proof of their competency to deal with aggravated crime, and their power to repress tumult and disorder. Without entering into a statistical analysis of crime under its several heads, and comparing the amount of one year with another, it can with truth be stated that, from 1822 up to the present period, there has been a gradual decrease in what may be called the indigenous crime of the country.

Sudden tumults and daring outrages, arising from some peculiar phases of the time, occasionally broke forth; but in the usual crime of almost all denominations there was a gradual but steady decrease.

Many of the tumults referred to occurred about the

years 1830-1831, and 1832. The counties of Limerick, Tipperary, Cork, Kerry, and Clare, of Kilkenny, Carlow, Wexford, and Waterford, became much disturbed, from the organized opposition which existed at that period to the payment of tithes ; and it became necessary to employ the troops and the constabulary to protect the bailiffs in the collection of them.

A history like this is not a proper place to discuss the abstract question of the right of exacting tithes by the Established Church from a large majority of the population, who were of a different religious persuasion. It was, however, the law, and the law in a civilized nation must be supported at any cost. It is well known, however, and the results must make it well remembered, that a systematic opposition to the payment of tithes existed throughout the whole of Ireland at the period adverted to. Clubs were formed for the purpose of rendering the process of law for their recovery null and void. The conspiracy was widespread, and to a certain extent successful. The nucleus of it was in Waterford, calling itself 'the Householder's Club.' This club directed all its energies against the assessments of church vestries ; and the Roman Catholic inhabitants were recommended not to pay, but to allow themselves to be distrained, and all classes of men were cautioned, under the severest penalties, not to purchase any cattle or goods so seized, when offered for sale.

It would answer no purpose to enumerate the several collisions with the peasantry, into which this unfortunate state of things unavoidably brought the

constabulary. One or two of the principal occurrences will suffice to show that they never acted with unnecessary or wanton rigour; and that whenever they were unhappily obliged to fire on the people, doing so was not resorted to until the last moment, and in the actual preservation of their own lives—nay, it would appear, that an ill-judged over-forgiveness had, in some instances, been the cause of calamity to themselves.

At Castlepollard, in the county of Westmeath, on the 23rd of May 1831, it being fair day, a riot occurred between two factions, when the police interfered to restore order. At once both factions seemed to forget their quarrels and turned conjointly upon the constabulary, attacking them with sticks and stones and other missiles. The attack was so sudden, that the police had scarcely time to load, which they were obliged to do promiscuously, as they were retiring towards their barrack; but their retreat was cut off at a narrow corner by the infuriated people, who, of course, backed the factions against them. Hemmed in thus on every side, and the furious attack continuing, they were obliged to fire in the actual defence of their lives. Upon this occasion thirteen of the assailants were killed, and many, of course, wounded. Mr. Bushe, son of the then chief justice, happened to be a looker on, and bore testimony to the great forbearance of the constabulary under Mr. Blake, chief constable, and stated subsequently that it was not until the very last moment, when nothing else could have saved them, one and all, from utter annihilation,

that they fired. A verdict of manslaughter, however, was brought in against Mr. Blake at the coroner's inquest, but the bills were ignored by the grand jury at the following assizes. It may be right, perhaps, to add, that the origin of this unfortunate occurrence had no connexion with the collection of tithes.

But at Newtownbarry, on the 18th of June, in the same year, three heifers, belonging to a man named Doyle, which had been seized for tithes due to the Rev. Mr. Elrington, brother to the then member for Louth, were brought to be sold by auction. The country people assembled in vast numbers and declared that they should not be sold. It was a pity that they did not take the milder course recommended by their friends "the Householder's Club," that no one should bid for them; but this, though rigidly carried out, so far as they were themselves concerned, might not, in all cases, answer the purpose; and the populace saw, what the Club did not see, that there might be persons of a different persuasion from themselves upon the ground, who might have no objection to *a bargain*. It was, therefore, the surest way, they thought, not to permit those heifers to be put up for sale, but to rescue them.

The constabulary, who had charge of the bailiffs and auctioneer, were previously attacked. The Rev. Mr. Hoare, a justice of the peace, was knocked off his horse and badly beaten, and his servant, who had come to his assistance, had one of his hands completely cut off by the draw of a scythe! Notwithstanding the desperate nature of the attack on the

police, the officer in command, Mr. King, behaved with the utmost coolness and forbearance. The crowd was so dense, that he hesitated to pour a shower of bullets amongst them, particularly as none of his men had been badly injured. Whether this was good policy, or even humanity, it is not for us to say; facts are all we have to deal with.

The yeomanry, of which there happened to be a corps quartered in the town, and neighbourhood, seeing that the constabulary were unable to cope with their assailants, turned out to the number of 150 men, under Captain Graham, primed and loaded. The officer in command of the constabulary, at once perceived the excited state of the yeomanry, and begged the officer to withdraw them from the scene, and leave the custody and protection of the bailiffs to himself and his men. This request was unheeded, and as the endeavour was just then renewed to rescue the cattle, the yeomanry fired, and seventeen persons were shot and a vast number wounded, the constabulary refraining from firing altogether.

On the 14th of December 1831, the most calamitous occurrence connected with the collection of tithes, in which the constabulary were ever engaged, took place. A process server, named Butler, had several processes to serve, for tithes due to the Rev. Dr. Hamilton. He proceeded on the above date, under the protection of Chief Constable Gibbons, and thirty-six policemen, to a place called Hugginstown, in the county of Kilkenny, for the purpose of serving them. An immense number of the country people assembled,

called together by the ringing of the chapel bells in all directions. Having served two or three processes without molestation, Butler, with the police, were proceeding to a farmer's house, through a narrow defile, with high banks on either side, upon the townland of Carrickshock, when they were suddenly set upon from the heights by upwards of two thousand persons variously armed, who only for a few moments ceased to hurl down their missiles, to demand the body of the process server, 'and they would retire without doing further mischief.' This was, of course, refused, when the brutal attack from behind walls and ditches, upon the top of the heights, was renewed. Stones of a large size were hurled from above, wounding and knocking down many of the unfortunate men, who from their position could take little or no effect by firing upon their assailants, protected as they were, by the rising ground.

The police now fired a volley at some of the men who appeared more prominently upon the face of the hill. By this volley two of the country people were killed; but it was a signal for a simultaneous rush upon the constables, who were now unloaded to a man. A furious and overwhelming attack was made upon them, hand to hand, with sticks, stones, pitchforks, scythes, and reaping-hooks, and a complete slaughter of almost the entire party was the result. Fourteen of the men, with Mr. Gibbons, their officer, were barbarously murdered on the spot, and eight badly wounded, including Butler, the process-server, who, with two of the wounded police, died on the

following morning ; the rest succeeded in making their escape. In this encounter only two of the country people were killed, and very few injured.

It cannot for a moment be doubted that, the melancholy termination to the above occurrence was the result of a want of foresight and judgment upon the part of the officer in charge of the constabulary, in leading his men through a narrow defile, with crowds of the excited populace ready to immolate them upon the heights ; but, *de mortuis nil nisi bonum*. He sleeps with his murdered comrades in the quiet and sequestered churchyard of Kilmogany, not far from the scene of the calamity.—*Requiescant in pace*.

It will not be necessary to pursue these conflicts further, the above are the principal ones involving any considerable loss of life ; but there were many comparatively of a minor character, arising out of the same cause, in all of which the constabulary exhibited a genuine forbearance, until set upon to the risk of their lives.

This state of things, however, was very distressing to the government, and required a milder remedy than that which was afforded by the point of the bayonet, or the fulfilment of the proverb, that ‘every bullet has its billet ;’ and in 1836, a bill was brought into parliament, and became law, which altered the tithes into a *rent-charge*. This seemed in some measure, to satisfy the people—or perhaps they did not quite understand it. The landlords paid the tithes, in the first instance, and not coming so directly from the pockets of the poor, to the purses of the

clergy, and as no distraint was ever now made for its payment, they did not feel it, or did not think they felt it so intolerably.

A lull now took place, and the constabulary got some rest from their labours. They could (for a while at least) devote the whole of their time and energies to their more legitimate duties, and bestow their attention upon the ordinary crime of the country ; and so they went on without anything of importance to occupy even their thoughts, until the 6th of Wm. IV. made a great change in their organisation.





CHAPTER V.

RE-ORGANISATION OF THE CONSTABULARY UNDER MR. DRUMMOND'S ACT OF 1836.

THE 6th of Wm. IV., cap. 13, consolidated the scattered elements of the four provinces into a uniform force, under one sole and absolute inspector-general, to whom was entrusted—subject to the approval of the Lord Lieutenant—the formation of a general code of regulations, and in whom, was also vested the distribution of the officers and men.

Having now arrived at the constabulary force as it is at present constituted, it will be necessary, by way of explanation, to enter a little more minutely into detail with respect to the provisions of the Act under which it was reconstructed, however dry and technical it must appear.

The 6th of Wm. IV. repealed the 54th of Geo. III., “the Peace Preservation Act,” which it is pleasant thus finally to get rid of. It also repealed (with the exception of small portions) the 55th of

Geo. III., cap 13, part of the 55th of Geo. III., cap. 158. The 57th of Geo. III., cap. 22, part of the 59th of Geo. III., cap. 92, part of the 3rd of Geo. IV., cap. 103, part of the 5th of Geo. IV., cap. 28, and the 9th of Geo. IV., cap. 63. The 55th of Geo. III. was an amendment of the 54th, and the rest of the Acts above quoted were amendments of the 55th, and so on of one another in succession, all relating to the appointment of constables, and for the preservation of the peace in Ireland.

From all these amendments—or attempted amendments—for the frequency with which they followed each other proved them to have been only attempts ; it would appear that the formation of an effective constabulary for Ireland was no easy matter.

The 6th of Wm. IV., cap. 13, now stood alone for that purpose, but it will be seen presently that it was thought necessary to improve even upon it.

By it all magistrates, inspectors, chief and other constables, &c., heretofore appointed under any of the above recited Acts, although now completely swept away, were respectively not only authorised, but required, notwithstanding the passing of the Act, to continue to discharge and execute their several duties and offices, with the like powers, privileges, and authorities, and subject to the same restrictions, obligations, &c, as heretofore, until it should be notified in the *Dublin Gazette*, by the inspector-general, to be appointed under the Act, that the constabulary force for such county, &c., was fully organised according to the provisions of the Act ; and upon such noti-

fication, the appointments of all such magistrates, inspectors, chief and other constables, &c., within each such county, and place respectively were to become void, and they were severally to discontinue to act under the said recited Acts, or any of them ; and all houses, horses, arms, accoutrements, saddles, bridles, books, papers, and appointments, &c., whatsoever, which had been provided for their use, under any of the former Acts, were to be transferred, and applied to the use of the constabulary force so organised ; and upon such notification in the *Dublin Gazette*, were to be vested in the receiver, to be appointed under the Act.

Of course it, at the same time, provided that all magistrates, inspectors, chief and other constables, &c., who should so discontinue to perform their duties under any of the former Acts, should thenceforward, severally discharge their duties, &c., respectively, under the new Act, without any further, or other appointment whatever thereto. It was also provided that they should, within one month from the publication of the notice in the *Gazette*, take and subscribe the oath prescribed by the new Act.

Thus, while all those ramifications were going on to effect a vital and important alteration in the constitution of the force, matters went on, 'in point of fact,' as the lawyers say, precisely as usual—most of the members of the force had only heard of the great change which was about to be wrought upon them, but which they never felt or perceived. They remained at their several stations, the duties were car-

ried on continuously as usual, notwithstanding that the legislature were almost puzzled with the intricacies of their own operations. 'The chief and other constables stood fast, as they were.'

It was principally the higher officers who were affected by the change. These officers consisted of an inspector-general, two deputy inspectors-general, and four county inspectors; these latter were afterwards limited to two, and their designation altered to provincial inspectors, by the 2nd and 3rd of Vic., cap. 75, which, at the same time, altered the designation of some other officers, as will be seen presently,

The minor officers now consisted of thirty-five sub-inspectors of counties; two each, for Cork, Galway, and Tipperary, and one for each of the other counties. The number of chief-constables was not exactly regulated or limited; but the Lord Lieutenant had the power to increase the number then existing, should circumstances require it. The designation of these officers, as it had been remarked already, was altered by the 2nd & 3rd of Vic. The sub-inspectors were thenceforward to be styled county inspectors, and the chief-constables were to be styled sub-inspectors.

The 6th of Wm. IV. also created eighteen paymasters, to whom was entrusted, through the receiver, the payment of the whole, being an average of two counties to each. They were each allowed an intelligent constable, to act as clerk and store-keeper.

The inspector-general was obliged to reside in Dublin, and he was invested with the arrangement of

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the different ranks amongst the officers and men, and the general distribution and superintendence of the whole force ; and with the assistance of the deputy inspectors-general, who were also obliged to live in Dublin, he was charged with the official correspondence throughout all Ireland. The Lord Lieutenant was also empowered to appoint a sufficient number of persons—'fit and proper persons,' of course—to be clerks to the inspector-general and his deputies. But it would also require a 'fit and proper' place, in which to transact the onerous and important business which must now necessarily devolve upon these concentrated officials ; and 'the constabulary office' was formed, consisting of almost an entire wing of the Castle of Dublin, in the Lower Castle Yard, which was appropriated to their use.





CHAPTER VI.

RE-ARRANGEMENT AND NEW DISTRIBUTION OF THE FORCE.

THE first duty which the inspector-general (and his deputies) had to arrange was the remodelling of the force, under the above Act, the sixth section of which gave him the power, from time to time, 'to establish such rules, orders, and regulations for the general arrangement of the several persons to be appointed under the Act, as well with respect to the places of their residence, their classification, rank, and particular services, their distribution and inspection, as to the description of arms, accoutrements, and other necessities to be furnished to them, and which of them should be supplied with horses, and all such other rules, orders, and regulations relative to the said force, so as to render it efficient for the discharge of the several duties thereof.'

To carry out these powers, the several ranks of both

officers and men were divided into such proportions as to numbers and rates of pay as seemed to be most desirable. But the remodelling of so large a force as the constabulary had now become, could not be effected in a moment. At this time there was a second class of chief constable, whose salary, including all allowances, was only £90 a year, while that of the first-class was £150. This was considered to be too great a transition in promotion, and an intermediate rate of pay was struck at £120. This class, of course, became the second, and the original second became a third, but most of those constituting the third were, of course, advanced to the second. It was late, too, in the following year before the rank of head-constable (in two classes) was added to the list, and still later when that of acting-constable was formed. This rank was found necessary, to meet sudden casualties occurring in the rank of constable, in order to have a person of some superior grade put in charge of 'a station.' They wore two gold chevrons on their arm, instead of three, as worn by constables, and the rank was considered a sure step to further promotion, as none were selected who were not considered eligible for a higher position.

It was under the inspector-generalship of Colonel M'Gregor that the *Constabulary List*, setting forth the ranks and stations of the force, was first published. It was compiled and arranged by Mr. Brownrigg. This was a very accurate epitome as far as it went, but was subsequently very much added to in many respects.

The constabulary force at this period consisted of—

- 1 inspector-general.
- 2 deputy inspectors-general.
- 4 county (afterwards provincial) inspectors.
- 35 sub-inspectors (in three classes).
- 217 chief-constables (in three classes).
- 260 head-constables (in two classes).
- 1350 constables, and about
- 8000 sub-constables.

The old proportion of sixteen men to a barony was found to be inadequate; and as the Act gave the power to appoint a like number to a half-barony, or other division of a barony, the sub-districts were multiplied, and laid out by townlands, without reference to the boundaries of baronies, 'the station' of the sub-district being as nearly central as possible. The number of townlands, however, were not equalised, but the area of each sub-district was pretty nearly the same, having a due regard to the population, and the consequent duties arising therefrom.

Where towns or villages could be made available for the centre, or nearly so, of sub-districts, they were selected for 'the station,' but in many instances the constabulary barrack continues to be a lone house at a 'cross roads,' far from village or hamlet of any kind. The police barrack is easily distinguished, either singly or amongst other houses, by an iron badge over the door. The badge is about 14 inches long and 10 inches broad, and is painted black, with the word, 'Constabulary,' in large raised letters, painted white, in a

half-circle, between a shamrock leaf in the centre and a crown at the top. The sub-district is distinguished by the name of the town or village in which 'the station' is placed, and if not in a town or village, then by the name by which the locality is best known, or by the name of the townland.

It might be supposed that matters were now likely to be permanent and perfect, but several subsequent Acts were passed to improve upon the 6th of Wm. IV. The first was the 6th of Wm. IV., cap. 36, an insignificant Act of only two sections ; however, it was thought necessary to pass it. Then there was the 2nd and 3rd of Vic., next the 8th and 9th of Vic., the 9th and 10th of Vic., and the 10th and 11th of Vic., with others passed still more recently. But it will not now be necessary to quote so many of the Geo.'s and Wm.'s and Vic.'s, but proceed to consider the constabulary force, in as perfect a condition as all these alterations and improvements may have brought it to. Here it may be well to quote *verbatim* the words of the most able and experienced man who ever ruled as inspector-general. In a pamphlet published by Sir Henry Brownrigg, in 1864, he says, referring to the force as newly constituted by the 6th of William IV., cap. 13 :—

'An undeniable change was now effected in the character of the force. Gradations of rank were instituted ; and discipline, before but partial and uncertain, was now established. The men were removed from their local connexions, amongst whom no policeman can in this country, for any length of time, impartially

discharge his duty. They could no longer act, as many had been known to do, as gatekeepers, gamekeepers, woodrangers, &c., and in other private capacities. Partiality, sectarian feeling, and other private influences, ceased seriously to affect them; everything, in short, calculated to impede them in the discharge of their proper functions was put out of their way.'

It may become necessary in the progress of this work hereafter to quote some further passages from the pamphlet in question, the contents of which, it is well known, it was the wish of its author to have disseminated as widely as possible.

Colonel Shaw Kennedy was the first inspector-general under the new arrangement. He was assisted in his office by Major Warburton, and Major (afterwards Colonel) Miller, as his deputies, the former being the senior. They had been two of the four inspectors-general of provinces, and their change of position might be looked upon as promotion, notwithstanding the addition of the word deputy. There were now four provincial depôts for the raising and training of recruits. That for Leinster at Philipstown, under Major (afterwards Colonel) Holmes; this was exclusively for cavalry. That for Munster at Ballinacollig, under Major Gallway. For Connaught one at Ballinrobe, under Major Priestly; and that for Ulster at Armagh, under Captain (afterwards Colonel) Roberts.

It will be seen that there was a considerable preponderance of the military element in the higher

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officers. But this did not seem sufficient to satisfy the military man who was now at their head. Six or seven military men were drafted from the standing army as sub-inspectors, thus 'infusing,' as he said, 'new blood into its veins.' The blood was certainly new, but it is a question whether it was as good as the old.





CHAPTER VII.

UNFORESEEN DIFFICULTIES AND SUBSEQUENT CHANGES.

COLONEL SHAW KENNEDY did not long enjoy (indeed it may be fairly doubted that he *enjoyed* it at all) his position as inspector-general. It was soon found out that a mistake had been made in inducing officers to join from the army, and that they were unable to accommodate themselves to their new and strange positions as police officers. They did not find it easy to learn the extraordinary duties which devolved upon them. In the army, everything had been specific and decided—admitted of no doubt or hesitation. In the police, they were one thing to-day, and another the next, according to circumstances, many of them being disagreeable to a military mind. They soon felt all this themselves, and did not very long continue amongst those over whom they had been thus unjustly placed. Let any one who is curious in this particular, look at the constabulary lists of that day, and of this, and ask,

‘Where are they now?’ and echo will answer, ‘are they now!’

There was one, however, whose conduct upon the first occasion where his temper and judgment came to be tested, gave much cause for complaint. As the person and circumstances were at the time of public notoriety, there can be no need now to be over delicate in referring to them; more particularly as they are necessary for the elucidation of the matter in hand.

Captain G——, who had been appointed county-inspector of Carlow, being on duty at a contested election in that town, unfortunately got into some altercation with the resident magistrate on duty. Captain G—— hesitated to comply with some orders which the magistrate personally gave him as to the suppressing of a riot. High words passed between them, to such an extent that those present were obliged to interpose and prevent personal violence by Captain G——.

After the election, and pending other proceedings, Captain G—— was removed to the County Mayo, and Colonel Shaw Kennedy recommended his dismissal altogether. This was, however, not complied with.

But Colonel Shaw Kennedy was not to be trifled with. The understanding, too, as to promotions and appointments, with which he accepted the office, were not being strictly observed on the part of the government, and Captain G——’s case being a manifest ignoring of the independence of his position, he resigned.

It thus became necessary to appoint a successor, and as distinguished military men were supposed to be the fittest for this civil appointment; another colonel—really a distinguished man—was selected by the government, provided he would accept the appointment. Colonel Duncan (afterwards Sir Duncan) M'Gregor, was then serving with his regiment in Canada, and was written to, offering him the appointment; and it was determined to keep it open for his reply. Major Warburton, who was senior deputy inspector-general, and who had spent the best years of his life in the service, naturally looked for the promotion; but no—it was to be kept open for Colonel M'Gregor.

'It is an ill wind that blows nobody good;' and it so happened that the words of a certain Act of Parliament provided that certain documents connected with the expenses of the force, should be signed by the *inspector-general*, and the time for certifying and passing these accounts soon after arrived. They could not be delayed, and the government were obliged to appoint Major Warburton, that they might be perfected.

The post had been offered to Colonel M'Gregor, and it was found more easy to explain the meaning of the words '*locum tenens*,' and '*pro tempore*,' to Major Warburton than it might have been to another strange colonel. Whether there was an understanding that he was only to hold office until his successor should arrive, can only be gathered from the fact that such was the case.

There existed, however, an unforeseen difficulty, which became apparent after the Major's appointment. It had escaped the notice of the government, and it was not likely that *he* would remind them of it. A rule had prevailed that no officer should retire upon pension of the increased pay of promotion to a higher rank, until he had served three years in the last rank. This rule was instituted to prevent old and worn-out officers and men from 'holding on' until they got into an advanced rank, and then almost immediately retiring upon the full pay of such rank. By whom or upon what authority this rule had been made we are not able to inform the reader ; it certainly was not founded upon or sanctioned by any Act of Parliament. Of this Major Warburton was very well aware, but he held his tongue until after his appointment to the inspector-generalship ; and when pressed to make way for Colonel M'Gregor, he naturally demurred, except upon his full pay as such. His retirement was at the suggestion of government, to say the least of it, and to answer their own purposes ; nevertheless, they attempted to carry out the rule to his detriment. But the Major was in possession, which was nine points out of ten in his favour ; and he plainly told them that he would hold on unless they allowed him to retire upon his full pay.

Colonel M'Gregor had written and accepted the appointment. He had made arrangements to retire from the army, and soon after arrived in Ireland. The battle was still raging between the government and Major Warburton as to his pension, whilst Colonel

M'Gregor was exercising his patience with that conciliatory smile with which he always contemplated matters of dispute. Well knowing how it would end, he was not uneasy ; neither was he mistaken as to the result.

It was an awkward position for the government ; to have invited a distinguished officer of Colonel M'Gregor's rank, from Canada, upon the understanding that there was an appointment worth fifteen hundred a year ready to receive him ; and when he arrived, to find it filled up, and that he had nothing to do but to walk about the streets, and look at the public buildings of the city—the constabulary office amongst the rest, the *outside* of which he did not much admire.

The government, of course, yielded, and 'the nine points of the law' retired, with a hearty goodwill, upon a pension of one thousand five hundred a year.

Upon the 1st of July, 1838, Colonel M'Gregor was sworn in as inspector-general, and it is but justice to that good man to say, that if he did not obtain as many benefits for the constabulary as his successor, that both officers and men felt at home under his mild and affectionate sway, though it was strict to the last degree.

It might not be in place here to set forth his character in his new position in too minute detail. The same would naturally be expected as regarded those who succeeded him, which would have the effect, more or less, of drawing a comparison, or perhaps a contrast,

not contemplated, which might be considered unfair. Suffice it to say, that Colonel (afterwards Sir Duncan) M'Gregor united in himself an affability of manner, with a firm and just determination of purpose—the *suaviter in modo*, with the *fortiter in re*, which soon gained him the affection and confidence of the whole force.

Although we do not feel at liberty ourselves to say much upon the subject, it may be allowable, in regard of the estimation in which he was held by the public generally, as well as by those he commanded, to quote the character assigned to him by two very eminent writers of the day. The following passage is taken from Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall's *Ireland*:—

‘The present inspector-general’—they are speaking of the constabulary—‘is Colonel M'Gregor, an officer of great experience, derived from sources in various parts of the world. It is admitted on all hands, that no man is better calculated to occupy so important a position; and he has succeeded—a task by no means easy—in governing the force without incurring the charge of recognising any party. Indeed, the great efficiency of the force arises from the fact that its chief officers have removed all suspicion of its being biassed by undue motives, and to the respect and esteem in which the inspector-general is universally held. He is emphatically popular amongst all classes. In every instance where we consulted the officers or the men upon this point, we received but one answer, given with a feeling akin to personal affection. Colonel

M'Gregor had been known to the world prior to his appointment in Ireland. It was this officer who published an account of the loss of "the Kent" by fire, in the Bay of Biscay, and to whose own share of exertion on the melancholy occasion, testimony has been borne by every survivor, except himself.'





CHAPTER VIII.

NECESSITY FOR NEW IMPROVEMENTS.

COLONEL M'GREGOR had not been much more than a year in office, when fresh difficulties were found to exist in the constitution of the constabulary, and new improvements were suggested. Indeed, it appears to be a force in which the necessity of alterations or additions seems to grow with its growth, if they do not strengthen with its strength. In August 1839, an Act was passed, 2nd & 3rd of Vic., cap. 75, principally for the purpose of forming a reserve; which it was intended should be ready, at a moment's notice, to start upon the order of the inspector-general for any part of Ireland, to co-operate with the regular force of whatever county or district required their aid, in the preservation of the peace. The words of the Act were, 'And shall be employed as occasion may require, in aid of, and in conjunction with, the said constabulary force, established in and for the said several counties and places throughout Ireland.'

The reserve to be thus appointed by the Lord Lieutenant, under this Act, was to consist of two sub-inspectors, four head-constables, and two hundred constables and sub-constables. A surgeon was also appointed exclusively to this reserve, at a salary of £300 a year. The Act did not make any mention of a commandant. It provided, however, that both officers and men should repair, upon the order of the inspector-general, to the dépôt, which was to be formed in the vicinity of Dublin, for the purpose of being 'instructed, trained, and exercised, in their respective duties.'

So much, then, for the reserve, for the present; it will be necessary, however, to return to it again.

The Act was in many other respects of a very comprehensive character. For instance, by the tenth section, two, out of the four county (afterwards styled provincial) inspectors were to be reduced, as soon as convenient, after the passing of the Act; and the Lord Lieutenant was bound to appoint those who were reduced, to be stipendiary magistrates, retaining, however, the same salaries as such, which they had been receiving as provincial inspectors.

The next section in the Act altered the designation of certain of the officers; that was to say, the four officers then styled county inspectors were thenceforward to be styled provincial inspectors, sub-inspectors were to be styled county inspectors, and chief-constables were to be styled sub-inspectors.

The next section empowered the Lord Lieutenant to increase the salaries of a limited number of officers,

and any number of the men; that was to say, to give county inspectors an increase of £50 a-year each, and to six sub-inspectors an increase of £30 a-year each, with an addition of something less than £5 a year to any number of constables and sub-constables. The provision of this section was at once carried out as regarded five county inspectors and six sub-inspectors, but it was not put in force as regarded any number of constables or sub-constables.

It was by this Act also, sec. 16, that joint stations were established on the borders of adjoining counties.

The government having felt the embarrassment on a former occasion of the necessity of certain documents being signed by the inspector-general, when there happened to be no such person, it was determined by this Act to prevent such an occurrence as that alluded to in a former part of this history. It therefore provided, that in case of the death, illness, removal, resignation, or absence (would not the one word 'absence' have been sufficient?) of the inspector-general, the Lord Lieutenant might empower one of the deputy inspectors-general to do all acts, &c. &c.

This Act also increased the salary of the senior deputy inspector-general, Col. Miller by name, from £800 to £1200 a year.

In 1842, an arrangement was made by the government, with the sanction of the Lords of the Treasury, instituting the appointment of cadets at the dépôt. It was a preliminary step to the rank of sub-inspector, to which they succeeded as vacancies arose. While

cadets they received only the pay of a constable, but wore the uniform of an officer, and it was to learn their duties as such that they were thus appointed. At first the number was limited to three above the number of sub-inspectors in the force, but the casualties in that rank seemed to demand a larger supply of trained officers; and the above limit was not at all times strictly observed, so many as six cadets being sometimes at the dépôt in training together.

The inspector-general had also had it conceded to him the right to appoint—from the constabulary—to every third vacancy to the resident magistracy. This right was exercised by Sir Duncan M'Gregor all through his inspector-generalship; and his successor, Sir Henry Brownrigg, adhered to it for the first four years, when he suddenly abandoned it—we do not know why—but there must have been an understanding between him and the government upon the subject, as it has never been re-acceded to his successor.

In 1846, a very great and important change took place, not in the interior or constitution of the force itself, but being, perhaps, of more moment to the community at large than all the chopping and changing which had taken place for the sixteen or seventeen years previously. On the 28th of August 1846, a bill was brought into Parliament, and an Act passed of a very liberal character, as regarded the expenses of the Irish Constabulary, 9 & 10 Vic., cap. 97. It provided that the whole of the expense should thenceforward be paid out of the Consolidated Fund; thus

relieving the counties at once, and for ever, from the moiety of the expense which they had hitherto been paying. It still held counties, cities, or districts, responsible for one moiety of the expenses of any extra police, which might be rendered necessary from a disturbed state of the county or district in question, if so proclaimed by the Lord Lieutenant, and, in like manner, for any extra force, which might be applied for by any seven or more magistrates, at any general or special sessions assembled.

An important provision of this Act was the power given to the Lord Lieutenant to increase the reserve very considerably, by appointing two sub-inspectors, four head-constables, and two hundred additional constables and sub-constables, so that the reserve now consisted of four sub-inspectors, eight head-constables, and four hundred constables and sub-constables. Independent, however, to this addition to the reserve, the Act empowered the Lord Lieutenant to appoint additional sub-inspectors, head and other constables, to any county, county of a city, barony, or district, which might be proclaimed to be in a disturbed state; but such extra force was to be withdrawn whenever it appeared that such county or district had ceased to be in a disturbed condition.

The dépôt for the accommodation of this large force was built by the Board of Works in a beautiful spot near the city end of the Phoenix Park, between the eastern gate and the Zoological Gardens. It is a handsome building (of its kind) facing the south-west, and commanding a splendid view of the Wicklow

Mountains from the upper windows, the magnificent trees of the park hiding the lower view. It stands upon about four English acres, and forms three sides of an oblong hollow square; the parade-ground, which is extensive, being in front. It is shut in from the direct road to the Viceregal Lodge by a handsome iron railing, through which crowds of *admirers* sometimes view the evolutions of the force, some of them perhaps endeavouring, in the intricacies of the movements, to recognise their favourite subs.—whether *officers* or men need not be recorded.

The building now affords ample accommodation for those appointed thereto, as some useful additions have lately been made to it, as a large riding-school, and an officers' mess-room, with a spacious ante-room. There is a good house for 'the commandant,' an officer whom it was found necessary to allocate exclusively to the charge and command of the reserve, and who is always one of the assistant inspectors-general. There is also a residence for the surgeon, and rooms for the officers.

Not the least attractive item in this account is the fact, that a splendid band has been established at the dépôt. It is supported by voluntary subscriptions from the whole force throughout Ireland, who have the advantage of it whenever they come to Dublin on either duty or pleasure. It is formed of members of the reserve, whose musical tastes and capabilities have been evoked, and tested by Mr. Harry Hardy, a gentleman of the first musical ability, and exquisite taste to be met with in the United Kingdom, and a

gentleman also of the most unvarying affability. Under his instructions a band has been formed, which for accuracy in all musical requisites, and sweetness of the most rapid and intricate melody, cannot be surpassed by any military band in her Majesty's service, and equalled by very few. 'The constabulary band' is, indeed, of wide-spread fame.

It was this Act, too, that at the very last section bethought of itself to alter the designation of the provincial inspectors to that of assistant inspectors-general.





CHAPTER IX.

REPEAL AGITATION—DEATH OF O'CONNELL—LIFE OF THE
YOUNG IRELAND PARTY.

ABOUT half the period which Sir Duncan M'Gregor remained in command had now passed away without anything of moment occurring to disturb the tranquillity of the country, or to engage more than the ordinary energies of those under his command. No doubt the repeal agitation during a great portion of that time was at its height. The association was at full work, and some excitement occasionally prevailed, as monster meetings were advertised to take place at the beck and nod of the great Liberator. But even Dan O'Connell, with all his caution, and it may be, all his genuine love for, and preaching of peace, failed to steer clear of the law. In 'driving his coach and six' through some Act of Parliament, he on one occasion ran one of his wheels against the kerbstone of the constitution, and was upset. On the 14th of October 1842, informations

were lodged against him for a misdemeanor. On the 12th of February in the following Spring he was put upon his trial, found guilty, and sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment ; but in the September following he was liberated by a reversal of the judgment of the court, upon an appeal to the House of Lords. .

Informations had been lodged at the same time against John O'Connell, Richard Barrett, Charles Gavan Duffy, Tom Steele, and others, but it will not be necessary to refer in detail to their trials and convictions. They were called the State Trials, and were made a handle of to exasperate the minds of the people.

O'Connell, some time after his liberation, although, perhaps, somewhat like a 'burnt child,' was not afraid to appear once more upon the popular stage of agitation, and again unfurled the green flag of repeal. He was too prudent, however, to try his hand at 'coach driving' again, but he was not afraid to bring the people together in hundreds of thousands to his monster meetings, where, such was the sway of his friendly and warm-hearted, yet stentorian eloquence—such the universal confidence which the people had in his honesty of purpose and the sincerity of his devotion to their cause, that he could move the vast multitudes, as one man, to his bidding. If his face was somewhat paler than heretofore, and his step less firm and robust, it was set down to his sufferings for their sakes, and his appearance was hailed with acclamations of sympathy, which rent the air.

About this period, indeed, those who knew the

great Liberator most intimately, could perceive that he was not the Dan O'Connell of other days. He knew it himself; he felt that his work was done, though not accomplished. Advancing in age, he sighed for rest. 'Stung by the ingratitude and perfidy of the Whigs,' the iron had entered into his soul. His conviction and imprisonment had given a shock to his herculean constitution, and he sought for a blessing in a visit to the tombs of the Apostles. Alas! he did not survive to fulfil his hope. He died on his journey, at Genoa, on the 15th of May 1847.

One of O'Connell's maxims had been that 'he who committed a crime gave strength to the enemy,' and there is no one act of his glorious career which contradicts the sincerity of the sentiment. The whole tenor of his expressed intentions and determination was the attainment of his objects—'civil and religious liberty'—through peaceable and lawful means; and from this course there is no reason to suppose that, so far as he was himself concerned, or so far as his power and influence over those with whom he was associated could prevail, that he would have swerved. But the result proved that even this great man was not able to check the progress of the machinery which he had put together, as the motion gained strength from its rapidity.

There existed, about the year 1846, a body of persons called 'the Young Ireland party.' They went hand in hand with O'Connell in his agitation for a repeal of the union; but they dissented from the mildness of his means. They openly proclaimed, in

their inflammatory and eloquent speeches, as well as in immortal and never-dying poetry, a doctrine of a very different and ultra character, openly avowing that an appeal to arms was not only necessary, but justifiable, according to circumstances, to obtain their rights, and that these circumstances had now arrived. O'Connell held to his own views and position of 'passive resistance,' and the consequence was that 'the Young Ireland' party separated from the repeal association altogether, and formed one of their own.

Having no one now to oppose them, and no such powerful man as O'Connell to dissent from, they boldly proclaimed the doctrine of an appeal to arms, 'justifying the necessity upon the degraded and suffering state of Ireland; that allegiance to the Crown depended upon the sympathy and protection of the State; that the kingdom of Ireland had received neither; that the whole country was desolated by pestilence and famine; that the people were dying by thousands; that women and children were lying dead and unburied by the road sides, "waiting" until the poorhouse officials could find time to carry them away, and cast them in coffinless heaps into the same pit, to putrify and cause fresh disease; that they had received neither sympathy nor aid from the British government, who rather exulted over the depopulation of that portion of the kingdom, which they felt to be their difficulty. Let them feel it—not to their heart's content, but to their heart's discomfiture.'

Such were the sentiments, and in some such language, addressed to an excited population. If

O'Connell had advised them not to transgress the law or attempt to trample upon the constitution, the Young Ireland leaders now told them boldly to set the law and the constitution at defiance. If O'Connell had told them that civil and religious liberty would be too dearly bought if purchased by the shedding of one drop of human blood, Young Ireland now boldly declared, that both should be won upon the green hills of their native land, at the point of the bayonet or the pike, though a deluge of the blood of their enemies—they forgot their own—should redden the mountain streams. If O'Connell had preached passive resistance, and that violence should only be resorted to in self-defence, as the means of asserting their rights, Young Ireland now declared 'that the demand for their rights should be heard from amidst the roar of musketry and the clash of swords.'

Such language, addressed in a genuine flow of impassioned eloquence, to a suffering and half-starved people, was received with a mad determination to abide the result of 'a rising,' and they only waited for a signal—but the signal was not yet!

In 1848, however, the excitement became every day more uncontrollable, and the certainty of some demonstration of physical force more apparent. The Young Ireland party, it might be said, in one sense, was now master of the field—there was no one to preach peace where there was no peace, and they were not idle. The late State Trials were still held up as a great grievance, where 'justice had been corrupted,' and 'tyranny allowed to crush.' Again,

inflammatory speeches were made, and seditious publications teemed from the press. Time was creeping on, and as yet no demonstration had been made. Several newspapers, of seditious tendencies, urged the people to be ready at a moment's notice, when that proper moment should arrive. Charles Gavan Duffy, of the *Nation*, was apprehended and thrown into Newgate; his newspaper and types were seized and suppressed, yet he continued to issue his seditious manifestoes from the body of the gaol, and there were not wanted other papers of a similar character to publish them to the world, amongst which were the *Tribune*, the *Felon*, and the *United Irishman*, of which latter John Mitchell was the editor and proprietor. This paper had gone a step in advance of its co-conspirators. It was also seized, and its proprietor cast into prison.

The case against this paper was still stronger than that against the *Nation*, and John Mitchell was the first person tried under the new Act, for 'treason-felony.' He was found guilty, and sentenced to be forthwith transported to Bermuda for fourteen years. This was in the end of May 1848, and matters were drawing to a crisis. Many disclosures had been made at Mitchell's trial, which must now either hurry or crush the intended 'rising.' The result proved which choice the leaders had made.

The suddenness with which the sentence upon John Mitchell directed his removal from the country was, perhaps, a judicious step; it took the people by surprise, and there was some talk amongst his friends

that the moment for action had arrived, and that he should not be permitted to be taken from amongst them. Great excitement prevailed, and threats of a rescue ran from one end of the city to the other. But the signal for which the people looked was not yet, and John Mitchell was 'permitted' to be removed, through a ragged mob of boys and women, with a few men, hooting from the corners of the streets as he was carried past, escorted by police and dragoons.

Whether it was that the Young Ireland party was not ready, or that they were afraid to resist his removal by force, is not known, but certain it is that the Dublin mob had expected an order for a rescue, and were only waiting for the signal; the appearance of Smith O'Brien, or any of his associates, in the streets, with a word, or a nod, or a point of the finger, and the rising was up that day; but not one of them were to be seen.

Much disappointment, if not indignation, was felt by the populace, at this man's having been removed from amongst them without an effort at rescue, through what they believed to be the pusillanimity of their leaders; but their leaders did not wish to be premature, though they were miserably so in the end. They were in daily and nightly attendance at the confederate clubs, organizing matters for the universal spread of their doctrines, before they openly took the field, but which, if taken at all, could not now be much longer delayed.

Smith O'Brien was the head and front of the Young Ireland party. Of an ancient and illustrious family,

of the Protestant religion, and in the early years of his life, whilst still a Tory in politics, he was returned to parliament for the county of Limerick, under the milder and more conciliatory phase of that political creed termed a Conservative. Of an enthusiastic and excitable temperament, his head was, upon abstract principles, undoubtedly a rebel; while his heart, had he given it time to think, may have been loyal and sincere. No one can doubt that his sympathy with the people was disinterested, arising from the destitution and suffering to which he witnessed his country reduced, by what he believed, at least, to be the misgovernment and injustice of its rulers. Gifted with a strong, or rather an obstinate mind, yet of a warm-hearted and generous disposition, he cast away friends and relations, renounced position, influence, nay, character itself, and fearlessly placed himself in the ranks of a rebellious and disorganised multitude.





CHAPTER X.

CITY OF DUBLIN PROCLAIMED.—£500 REWARD FOR THE
APPREHENSION OF SMITH O'BRIEN.

ON the 18th of July 1848, the city of Dublin was proclaimed under the Crime and Outrage Act, and a few days after the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* Act arrived. The confederate clubs were proclaimed as illegal, and the Lord Lieutenant's warrants were issued for the apprehension of the leaders of the Young Ireland party, who had separated through the southern counties to organize branch clubs, and make other preparations in furtherance of their designs.

They had got ten days' law—no, not law, that is only a phrase—but they had got ten days' start of the government on their nefarious mission. But, upon the 28th of July, a proclamation was issued, offering a reward of £500 for the apprehension of Smith O'Brien, charged with high treason, and £300 each for the apprehension of Meagher, Dillon, and Doheny.

This proclamation brought matters to a crisis. It was now, 'in for a penny, in for a pound,' with Smith O'Brien: 'he might as well be hanged for a cow as for a goat.' His friend John Mitchell had escaped hanging at the sacrifice of fourteen years' exile from the land of his birth—the land he so dearly loved, and had so dearly defended. He himself was now charged with high treason—not under the new Act with mere 'treason felony'—if taken he must be hanged, and perhaps drawn and quartered. He knew the penalty well; and he knew that, as a traitor to his queen, he deserved it. 'Better die the death of a soldier than that of a felon, and the hour was come.' Thus argued Smith O'Brien with his associates, in the town of Wexford, *en route* to rebellion.

Kilkenny and Tipperary, from his private sources of information, he believed to be his strongholds for a first, and he hoped a successful, demonstration, and thither he proceeded without loss of time. In Kilkenny he paid a hasty visit to St. Canice's Cathedral; not that (at that moment at all events) he felt any interest in either the building itself, or its history, but that through it he gained access to 'Cromwell's chair,' upon its roof. Even this point of vantage did not give him a sufficiently exalted view of the surrounding country, and he subsequently ascended 'the round tower of other days,' close by. From the top of this he took a long and anxious view of the vast theatre of hills and valleys which lay beneath him, no doubt mapping in his mind the scene of some bloody and victorious field, for his country's

good. Poor enthusiastic fool! how miserably short fell the reality from the fancied vision of his dream.

The same evening he proceeded to Callan, where he was received with the greatest enthusiasm by the lower orders of its population, but the respectable portion of the inhabitants were in the greatest state of excitement and alarm.

The following day was Sunday, and the news that Smith O'Brien had arrived spread like wildfire from mouth to mouth—that he had been proclaimed an outlaw and a traitor, and had paid Callan the compliment to take refuge amongst them. This was not then the time to betray him. 'Had he not sacrificed everything that a man might be supposed to hold most dear for their sakes, and come down now to place himself as their leader in the field? What a glorious opportunity was there not here afforded, for a suffering and degraded people to rescue themselves from the yoke of the heartless tyrants by whom they were trampled upon—far better, more glorious, more honourable for them to die fighting for freedom, than to die by the lingering process of starvation in batches by their fireless hearths. He was ready, nay, panting, to lead them to victory; all he wanted to ensure success were men and arms.' Such language as this—*if not the very words*—was addressed by one of the conspirators to the rabble—for they could be called little better—upon the outskirts of the town upon that Sunday evening.

During the next day neither Smith O'Brien nor his associates made their appearance, and their where-

abouts was not known ; some believe it to have been in a house little better than a cabin, in the direction of Mullinahone. On the following day, however, he was openly at Mullinahone, and wore a green cap with a gold band and a peak. Hundreds flocked around him here, but they were poorly armed, and altogether unprovisioned. Thousands would, no doubt, have joined his standard, but the complexion of the whole affair was discouraging beyond a hope, and the 'turn out' was miserably below his own expectations. Those who met him here remained standing in the rain without a morsel of food for hours, or a drop to drink—the latter being almost more essential than the former, in a case of the kind. He felt the difficulty, and bought up all the bread in the town, and had it distributed amongst his followers ; but he intimated to them 'that they should procure provisions for themselves from their own resources, as he was unable to do so, and he would not permit any to be obtained at the expense of violence to any man's property !'

Here was a pretty specimen of a man who had aspired to the leadership of an insurrectionary movement, which was to 'free his country from a tyrant's yoke !'

He was still sanguine that matters would mend as he progressed, and proved that he was willing to cast his life upon the result, either at the cannon's mouth or on the scaffold. One successful demonstration, however slight, he knew would be the signal for a general rush to his standard ; and if he could only

succeed in worsting a section of the queen's troops, however small, or in putting to route a party of the constabulary, however few, it would be magnified by the tongue of fame into a great victory, and bring unlimited numbers to his army !

With a view, perhaps, of inducing the constabulary of Callan to vacate their barracks, and take the field in pursuit, he marched on the 26th to Ballingarry, about six miles eastward. He was attended on his march by a large mob, consisting for the most part of women and boys, hurraing and shouting, but there certainly were not one hundred able-bodied men amongst them, and the one-half of even these were not armed.

At Ballingarry he was met by some of his leaders, and harangues were made in front of the chapel, calculated to inflame the minds of the people and to inspire hope. These harangues had some effect. On the next day the numbers were considerably increased, but in most cases they were unarmed, and in many instances they scarcely knew what object had brought them together. The chapel bell was kept ringing the whole night through, and the numbers continued to increase. Still Smith O'Brien and his associates could not have been sanguine of success. The crowd were not enthusiastic in the cause—some seemed even to doubt that he was genuine and sincere. His religion, and position in society, where he had herded with aristocratic companions, were not in his favour, and even the well known tendencies of his companions did not save him from the words *spy* and *informcr*,

which were whispered by not a few amongst the crowd. Three-fourths of 'his men' were unarmed ; some fifty or sixty, perhaps, had guns and ammunition, and about as many more had pikes—but none had food.

On Thursday, the 27th, he moved on towards Killenaule. He was met on the way by the priest of the parish and his curate, both of whom, in the most energetic and sincere manner, remonstrated with him upon the wickedness as well as the madness of his project, and implored him to abandon it ere it was too late. Their efforts did not avail. His reply was that 'it was already too late ; that he was then at the head of his army, and must see the thing out.' He then pushed on to Killenaule, where, so far as cheers and hurrahs went, he was most enthusiastically received ; even bouquets of flowers were thrown upon him from the windows as he passed, but there did not appear to be any increase to the armed portion of his army.

On Friday, the 28th, he moved to a place called 'the Commons,' which was rather a retrograde movement, towards Ballingarry again. It was a district which appeared to engage a great portion of the hopes of both himself and his leaders, for here he met the principal members of the conspiracy—Thomas Francis Meagher, John Dillon, Michael Doheny, M'Manus, O'Donohoe, Stephens, O'Mahoney, and others of minor repute. O'Brien himself and some of the others here harangued the people, explaining their objects, and claiming their aid—such harangues as might be expected from such persons to such a people,

in such a case. They had much hopes from the colliery population of that district. They were aware that they were composed of a vast number of devil-may-care fellows, who had nothing to lose, and who would 'be glad to see the daylight by day !' as one of the speechifiers had expressed it.

Here an unfortunate step was taken by Smith O'Brien, if, indeed, anything could add to the overwhelming mass of the proof of his guilt. He sent for the foreman of the collieries, and gave him a letter addressed to the Mining Board, and requested him to deliver it forthwith. This letter was afterwards given in evidence against him on his trial, and no evidence which was there produced went more home to convict him of high treason.

A council was held here, at which their prospects were ably discussed by Smith O'Brien himself, and those already adverted to. He was the most sanguine amongst them ; if not, he was certainly the most enthusiastic. It is believed that he was the only man in the council who proved true to the hopes he had formed, and rumour had it, that his associates, seeing the insufficiency of their resources, endeavoured to prevail on their chief to abandon the whole affair. He, however, having gone so far already, was resolute to abide the result. Whether in their hearts they had determined to abandon him at the time can never now be known ; but subsequent circumstances would almost favour such a supposition, for, under the ostensible purpose of 'rising the country,' they left him, and proceeded in different

directions with a promise of speedy aid ; but whether their expressed object was sincere, or a mere pretext for deserting him is not certain ; it is certain that they never returned with the promised aid ; nor did any one of them establish a divisional army elsewhere.

On the following day, Saturday, the 29th of July, Smith O'Brien found himself upon the Commons, the sole commander of as heterogeneous an army as a general ever beheld. But Smith O'Brien was no general, and, perhaps, did not know the miserable material he had with which to annihilate the constabulary, to say nothing of the queen's troops ! He was still, however, mad enough to be sanguine. He did not doubt the faith of those who had left him, promising aid from every direction, and 'On, boys, on,' were his words.





CHAPTER XI.

THE BATTLE OF FARRINRORY—DEFEAT OF THE REBEL ARMY
BY THE CONSTABULARY.

IT was now known by the authorities that O'Brien was encamped (!!) on the Commons in the county of Tipperary, bordering the county of Kilkenny, and it was time to adopt hostile measures. There were no telegrams in those days, at least not in these parts, and the trains upon the railway had not commenced to run the whole way through from Dublin to Kilkenny. 'The line,' however, had been finished (we were going to say *perfected*). The Royal Agricultural Cattle Show had been held in Kilkenny, on the Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday of the week which was destined to terminate with so much excitement and alarm. As usual, the show was concluded by 'a grand ball,' which was held on this occasion at the Railway Terminus, which had been just completed, and had been boarded in, and fitted up for the purpose in 'the most tasteful manner.'

The whole aristocracy of the county Kilkenny, and the surrounding counties had assembled; wit and beauty sparkled all around, and the heart-inspiring music sent a tapping thrill of impatience to every 'light, fantastic toe.' There could not have been less than five hundred persons present. Amongst them were the Duke of Leinster, Lords Bessborough, Ashbrook, and Desart; in fact all the nobility and gentry of the province, and many more distant parts of Ireland, together with about fifty military officers, then quartered in Kilkenny. But not in one head was there a thought of Smith O'Brien, or 'a rising,' except it was to rise up for a fresh gallop or polka; and if there was a thought of rebellion, it was only in the heart of some disloyal swain, who was anxious to 'throw off the yoke' of some tyrant fair one, by whom 'he was trampled on,' and his 'rights withheld.'

'But all that's bright must fade, the brightest still the fleetest,' and many an engagement to dance 'the supper set' was unceremoniously neglected that night. To compare small things with great we might, at this point, bring our reader's memory back to the night before the battle of Waterloo, and say:—

'There was a sound of revelry by night,
 Kilkenny's capital had gathered then
 Her beauty and her chivalry, and bright
 The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men;
 A thousand hearts beat happily, and when
 Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
 Soft eyes looked love to eyes that spake again,
 And all went merry as a marriage bell;
 But, hush! hark! a deep sound strikes like a rising knell!'

For see, the county inspector of constabulary has disengaged himself from the arm of his partner, and retired to a corner to receive a despatch! In spite of his discretion and assumed self-possession, the rumour soon ran through the rooms, that rebellion was around them—almost at the doors. The despatch had been brought direct from the Castle of Dublin by Head-constable Crowley, of the city of Cork constabulary, who travelled express. It contained the proclamation offering £500 for the apprehension of Smith O'Brien, and further stated, that it was supposed 'the said Smith O'Brien was then encamped with the rebel army (!!) somewhere upon the borders of the counties of Tipperary and Kilkenny.'

The county inspector (Mr. Blake) cast a glance over its contents, and turning to one of the county authorities—who by-the-bye was watching him—he handed it to him. It was no secret; it was not marked 'private and confidential;' and the fact, for it was now more than a rumour, of open rebellion, became generally known.

Confusion and disorder ensued, and of course the military disappeared unceremoniously, and at once. Some of the indefatigable mufty dancers, who had been all the evening 'hoping for the pleasure,' but who had been cut out by the red coats, took fresh courage, seeing that they were not now in the way, and they were more successful. They called for music, and started in final triumph, not having heard the particulars, and only guessing that 'something

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was the matter,' from the suddenness with which the officers had left.

Carriages had been ordered in all directions forthwith, and in less than half an hour the rooms did not contain a single noble lord, or sprig of nobility of any sort or title, those who remained consisting chiefly of persons belonging to the town and vicinity; wondering and alarmed, and waiting for carriages.

Mr. Blake left Kilkenny on that morning, the 29th, about four o'clock, and proceeded to Killenaule, where he ascertained the exact whereabouts of Smith O'Brien and his army! He at once wrote a despatch to Callan, ordering Sub-Inspector Trant, with the men then at his command, to march for the Commons, so as to arrive at three o'clock, P.M., and he sent the same orders to Mr. Cox, at Cashel, as he expected to arrive there himself with the military from Thurles at that hour.

Mr. Blake then pushed on to Thurles, where General M'Donald was quartered in command of the troops. When Mr. Trant received the despatch, he got his men ready, and started at once, without calculating the time of his arrival, and found himself approaching the intended place of his destination between twelve and one o'clock, instead of at three, as directed in the despatch. On his approach to the Commons he found himself surrounded on all sides by the rebels, shouting and hurraing, and firing shots. Crowds poured down the hills before, behind, and on both sides of him, to the number of about 3000 men, many of whom were armed with guns, pikes, scythes, and

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pitchforks. Smith O'Brien was in their midst, organizing, or endeavouring to organize them. Sub-Inspector Trant saw, or thought he saw, that in open conflict, with such tremendous odds against him, it would be a mere sacrifice of life to give battle. But he *may* have been *wrong*. He had forty-six men of all ranks with him, well armed and disciplined. However, a large slated house appearing not far off, he ordered his men to break, and rush forward to take possession of it. In this they succeeded, Mr. Trant, however, leaving his horse and accoutrements in possession of the enemy. They had scarcely got inside, shut to the door, and commenced to fortify the house, when the crowd of rebels surrounded it on all sides, firing into it whenever a chance of injury to the inmates presented itself. There were five young children in the house, orphans, belonging to the widow M'Cormick, when the police entered, and they were kept by Mr. Trant as hostages.

An interesting incident here occurred, which, as it is indicative of his manly feelings and warm-heartedness, may be recorded of the poor, mad enthusiast, Smith O'Brien.

The widow M'Cormick, in whose house the constabulary party had taken refuge, had gone from home for a short time that morning, leaving her children in the house in care of the eldest, a boy not more than ten years of age. A messenger soon followed, who told her the state of affairs, viz., 'that there were about forty police shut up in her house, that they had her children shut up along with them, and that the

house was riddled with bullets, for volley after volley of shots were firing into it and out of it !' Of course the messenger was not below the mark. The poor woman ran home in a state of distraction, but dared not venture up to the house, the windows of which she saw bristling with carbines and fixed bayonets. She then rushed through the crowd, until at last Smith O'Brien was pointed out to her, when, casting herself down before him, she poured forth a volume of *abuse* and *entreaty*, calling on him to 'deliver her five poor orphans from the murderous peelers, who would ate her lambs. Was she to be robbed of her home an' her children the same day, the same hour? Oh, wirra, wirra, wirrastru, that ever I should live to see this day. If you be a man,' she added, suddenly, 'come up to the house this minute, an' get me my childer.' O'Brien was a man, and could not resist this appeal to either his courage or humanity, and said that he would go to the house and demand her children, but he would not permit her to risk her life by going near it. This she sternly refused, and broke from those who would have held her back, and they approached the house together. They went by the rear, where there was most cover from the command of the windows, and having gained the gable, they crept round to the parlour window, where they were actually in conversation with one of the police respecting the children, when, unfortunately, some fool in the crowd threw a stone at one of the upper windows, and smashed a couple of panes of glass. This was a signal for a fresh volley from within, by which two

men were killed and several wounded. It was no use remaining longer in such an exposed place, and the widow M'Cormick and Smith O'Brien made the best of their way to the road again.

The siege may be said to have now commenced in good earnest. A brisk fire was kept up on both sides, some of the assailants were shot, and some wounded, while the police being under cover escaped completely uninjured.

About this time, a mounted policeman in plain clothes—Constable Carrol from Kilkenny—was making his way to Mr. Trant with a message from Mr. Greene, the resident magistrate, when he was met by Father Fitzgerald, P.P., Ballingarry, and his curate, Father Maher, both of whom undertook to go up to the Widow M'Cormick's house along with him. It is right, however, to state that neither of these gentlemen were in any way connected with the movement; they were diametrically opposed to it on every ground, and their object was peace. On their way to the house they met Smith O'Brien, who took Constable Carrol's horse from him, and rode it for the rest of the day. Carrol was at once looked upon by the rebels as an enemy, and what was worse, a spy, and he would have been shot on the moment were it not that Smith O'Brien himself ordered and guaranteed his safety. Father Fitzgerald had then some conversation with Smith O'Brien, after which Constable Carrol and he approached the house. At first Carrol was not known, and was in much danger, as carbines were pointed on him from several of the

windows; but some of Mr. Trant's men soon recognizing him, they 'recovered their arms.' Father Fitzgerald advanced to the window under the same immunity which had been afforded to their comrade. He requested to speak with the officer, and Mr. Trant at once came forward. A conversation then took place between them, on the part of the priest as to making peace and preventing any further bloodshed. The opposite party would be satisfied by their giving up their arms, and they would be permitted to depart uninjured, &c., &c. ; and on Mr. Trant's part, as to the strength of their position, and their firm determination never to surrender, or deliver up their arms but with their lives.

This conversation embraced a great deal more than the above. On the one part, some suggestions as to the *im*possibility of holding out from the want of provisions, and the *pos*sibility of the 'opposite party' setting fire to the house; and on the other part, as to a certain amount of provisions which they had found in the house, sufficient to sustain them until relief should arrive, and the hostages which they had in the Widow M'Cormick's children, against the burning project. Father Fitzgerald's arguments having failed to stagger Mr. Trant's loyalty, or courage, he then retired with Constable Carrol, who had been committed to his care and protection at Mr. Trant's earnest request, and which it was faithfully promised he should receive. The result proves that the promise was sincere, for Constable Carrol arrived safe in Kilkenny, late on the same evening, on his own horse,

which Smith O'Brien had returned to him, with many thanks.

Father Fitzgerald, finding his mediation of no avail, had returned home, and left matters to take their course.

The insurgents finding that they could not succeed in making an entry into the house, and that they had altogether the worst of the firing, were about to attempt to set it on fire, notwithstanding the hostages who were within. To effect this, a load of hay had been procured and driven up close to the back door. It may here be remarked that the rear of the house was by no means so much exposed to the fire of the police, as the front. Here M'Manus, who was the only leader then with O'Brien, endeavoured to ignite the hay by snapping a pistol several times close to it, but he could not succeed, as it had got wet from the heavy rain of the previous night. This project was then abandoned, and a more systematic and determined attack by all the armed men available, was determined on; and some sledges and heavy pieces of timber were procured, with which to smash in the door. Just then the cry arose, that 'here are the Cashel Police,' and almost at the same moment Sub-inspector Cox, with about six-and-thirty men, were seen coming up the hill to the rescue. Then, indeed, the dispersion of the rebels began to take place in earnest. After some faint and timid attempts to make a stand, the first volley from Mr. Cox's party—which makes us believe that open-air fighting would, all through, have been the best—sent them flying in all

directions, and Mr. Trant and his 'brave forty' were set at liberty, and they arrived home at Callan, the same evening, without a scratch.

Thus was this miserable attempt at insurrection scattered to the winds by a few of the constabulary force, without even the appearance of the military to support them. Upon this subject it may be added, that when Mr. Blake had sent off the despatches to Cashel and Callan, directing the constabulary to march for 'the Commons,' so as to arrive there at three o'clock P.M., he had made his calculations that he should himself have arrived at Thurles, where General M'Donald was in command of the troops, explain to him the precise state of affairs, and reach the Commons with the military by that hour. But he did not reach the Commons at all, and his absence may be accounted for, by the fact, that the general in command of the military at Thurles was so matter-a-fact an old gentleman, that he would take nothing for granted, but should see every document, and when at last he was obliged to admit himself satisfied of the abstract facts, he would not stir until he first consulted maps, roads, and distances, in order that he might make no mistake—and he certainly did make none—at least, he thought so. But the constabulary, whose map of the country was under their feet, not rolled up against the Grand Jury room wall, and whose knowledge of roads and distances was in their heads, and not in a memorandum book, had rendered the study of both by the general a work of superelevation, for they had already repulsed the rebels, and

dispersed their leaders without the presence of a single soldier. Virtually, and indeed actually, this abortive attempt at 'freeing the country from a tyrant's yoke' was at an end; the leaders who had left Smith O'Brien on the previous day, to 'rise the country,' found it too heavy for them, and had not fulfilled their mission, if such indeed it were, and Smith O'Brien had fled, none knew whither. But he soon turned up! Upon Saturday, the 5th of August, just one short week from the day of his discomfiture and humiliation, he walked into the Railway Station, at Thurles, and took a ticket for Limerick. He was buttoned up to the chin in a brown frock coat, and his trowsers, which did not appear to have felt a brush for many days, were turned up at the insteps. Hulme, a railway porter, thought he cut a very seedy figure, and, at the same time, he thought of the £500. He kept his eye upon him for a few moments, when seeing Head-constable Haniver coming up the road towards the station-house, he considered no further time should be lost, if he hoped to secure the undivided reward; so walking up to him he laid hold of him by the arm, saying, 'you are Smith O'Brien, and I arrest you in the name of the Queen.' He was unarmed, and made no resistance, but remained silent. Head-constable Haniver then came up, just in time to be late, and Hulme told him he had arrested Smith O'Brien, 'and here he is.' The Head-constable then took charge of him, and the train being about to start, Hulme was obliged to leave him for his more '*legitimate duties*;' but, turning to the Head-constable,

he said, 'recollect that Smith O'Brien is my prisoner, but not being able to remain, I hand him up to the civil authorities.' Haniver laughed, and replied, 'all right Hulme, you are the lucky man.'

O'Brien was as docile as a lamb, and sat in the ante-room of the station-house with the Head-constable, until a reinforcement of the constabulary which he had sent for arrived. He was then conveyed to gaol. Some of the other conspirators were soon after taken, and they were all transmitted to Dublin, where they lay in Kilmainham Gaol until the Special Commission was issued in the month of October following.

It was necessary to describe so much of the history of this mad rebellion, in order to connect the constabulary with its suppression; but it will not be necessary to follow the prisoners through the tedious detail of their trials and convictions. Suffice it to say that they were convicted, upon the most overwhelming evidence, of high treason, and sentenced to the awful and soul-harrowing penalty attached to that highest of crimes. The extreme penalty, however, was subsequently remitted, through the clemency of the Queen, but they were all transported for life.

Lord Chief Justice Blackburne declared in his charge to the jury on Smith O'Brien's trial, that the Irish Constabulary had saved their country, and deserved its lasting gratitude.





CHAPTER XII.

NEW ENACTMENTS—ADDITIONAL DUTIES IMPOSED UPON THE CONSTABULARY.

THE conviction and transportation for life of Smith O'Brien and his co-conspirators, put an effectual check to the rebellion of that day, and the Young Ireland party hung their diminished heads, and slunk back by degrees into silent oblivion, being soon heard of no more. The constabulary, as a consequence, subsided from the excitement which the expectation of a general insurrection had naturally produced in their minds. Poor Dan O'Connell was fast asleep in the silent grave, unconscious of the turmoil which his own 'peaceful agitation' had stirred up, until he was unable to control it.

The time had now returned when the constabulary, laying by the carbine and the sword, turned once more to the requirements of the more tranquil routine, which could be effected with the less war-like implement of a two-foot baton.

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While they are therefore pursuing their more congenial avocations, it will be necessary to refer once more to some subsequent enactments affecting the force. As the 9th and 10th of Vic., cap. 97, had transferred the expense of the regular constabulary from the several counties and cities to the Consolidated Fund, it became desirable that the exact quota of officers and men for each county should be defined, and the 11th and 12th of Vic., cap. 72, was accordingly passed. This was a very judicious provision of the Act in question, and facilitated matters in every respect, both as regarded the counties themselves and the Consolidated Fund. It also rendered the accounts and 'certificates' of the inspector-general of much more easy arrangement.

It will, perhaps, be satisfactory, more particularly to those connected with the force, and will not be out of place here, to give the original schedule, which was annexed to the Act, but which it was found necessary upon two subsequent occasions to alter. Here it is—

| COUNTY. | County Inspectors. | Sub- Inspectors. | Head Constables. | Constables and Sub-constables |
|--------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| Antrim, | 1 | 8 | 11 | 224 |
| Armagh, | 1 | 6 | 8 | 145 |
| Carlow, | 1 | 5 | 6 | 151 |
| Cavan, | 1 | 8 | 12 | 400 |
| Clare, | 1 | 11 | 12 | 400 |
| Cork, | 2 | 20 | 28 | 612 |
| Donegal, | 1 | 8 | 14 | 176 |
| Down, | 1 | 7 | 9 | 224 |
| Carried forward, | 9 | 73 | 100 | 2332 |

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| COUNTY. | County Inspectors. | Sub-Inspectors. | Head Constables. | Constables and Sub-constables. |
|----------------------|--------------------|-----------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| Brought forward, | 9 | 73 | 100 | 2332 |
| Dublin, | 1 | 5 | 7 | 231 |
| Fermanagh, | 1 | 6 | 8 | 181 |
| Galway, | 2 | 15 | 24 | 704 |
| Kerry, | 1 | 7 | 9 | 168 |
| Kildare, | 1 | 6 | 8 | 250 |
| Kilkenny, | 1 | 9 | 12 | 410 |
| King's, | 1 | 7 | 9 | 319 |
| Leitrim, | 1 | 6 | 10 | 311 |
| Limerick, | 1 | 10 | 18 | 387 |
| Londonderry, . . . | 1 | 4 | 6 | 96 |
| Longford, | 1 | 5 | 7 | 191 |
| Louth, | 1 | 5 | 8 | 224 |
| Mayo, | 1 | 9 | 14 | 274 |
| Meath, | 1 | 8 | 11 | 324 |
| Monaghan, | 1 | 5 | 7 | 145 |
| Queen's, | 1 | 8 | 12 | 356 |
| Roscommon, | 1 | 8 | 12 | 447 |
| Sligo, | 1 | 6 | 9 | 191 |
| Tipperary, | 2 | 20 | 24 | 1030 |
| Tyrone, | 1 | 6 | 8 | 150 |
| Waterford, | 1 | 6 | 8 | 149 |
| Westmeath, | 1 | 8 | 11 | 282 |
| Wexford, | 1 | 8 | 10 | 240 |
| Wicklow, | 1 | 6 | 8 | 199 |
| CITIES AND TOWNS : | | | | |
| Carrickfergus, . . . | ... | ... | 1 | 10 |
| Cork, | ... | 1 | 3 | 100 |
| Drogheda, | ... | 1 | 2 | 40 |
| Galway, | ... | 1 | 2 | 65 |
| Kilkenny, | ... | 1 | 2 | 50 |
| Limerick, | ... | 1 | 3 | 80 |
| Waterford, | ... | 1 | 2 | 70 |
| Totals, | 35 | 262 | 375 | 10,006 |

Note.—Of the 10,000 constables and sub-constables in the above schedule, about 300 are mounted, and distributed through the several counties, in the proportion of one mounted man to each sub-inspector, and two to each county inspector, while a reserve of young horses is always kept at the dépôt for remounts, as the others become old or unserviceable.

There are no other provisions in this Act requiring any special notice. The tenth section, however, may call for a remark. Referring to the provisions already made by former Acts, to hold courts of inquiry, and giving power to the inspector-general or deputy inspector-general, or persons nominated by the Lord Lieutenant, to summon witnesses, and examine them on oath, the above section of this Act did away with the necessity of the Lord Lieutenant nominating persons for that purpose altogether, and gave the power of nominating officers to hold these courts solely to the inspector-general and the deputy inspector-general, and it empowered the assistant inspectors-general to act as presidents of such courts without any special appointment. Witnesses attending on the summons of the president, having been by a former Act privileged from arrest while attending, and going to and returning from these courts, the privilege was also secured to them by this Act, the president having a power to inflict a fine, not exceeding £5, upon any witness refusing to attend upon his summons, or, attending, if he refuses to give evidence. It would be difficult, however—if possible—to refer to an instance where it was found necessary to resort to such powers.

The other sections are matters of every-day detail, embracing such subjects as 'certificates of expenses,' upon applications from Town Councils of boroughs, Railway Companies, &c.

The next Act was the 14th and 15th Vic., cap. 85, passed in 1851. This Act did away with the pay-

masters, store-keepers, and paymasters' clerks—that is, it did away with the paymasters altogether, but the store-keepers and clerks, being always members of the force, who had only been appropriated to them, were retained, and returned to their original duties. The Act directed the Lords of the Treasury to make rules and regulations, from time to time, for the performance of the duties heretofore performed by the paymasters, and also with respect to the persons belonging to the constabulary, by whom they should be thenceforward performed. It also made some alterations in the mode of making out, and furnishing the inspector-general's certificates, to be laid before road-sessions, for the expenses of any extra police force, for a moiety of which any county, county of a city, &c., was liable. And as the paymasters had been in the habit of defraying the expenses for the conveyance of prisoners, it became necessary to make other provisions for that purpose. It was therefore enacted, 'that all such expenses,' &c., but the detail of which would be too tedious to follow up, in the technical phraseology of the Act, 'should, in the first instance, be defrayed by the sub-inspector of the district in which the offence was charged to have been committed,' &c., &c., 'sent monthly to the county inspector, certified by him, and forwarded to the Board of Superintendence, who were bound, upon being satisfied of their reasonableness (which some Joe Humes upon the Board sometimes were *not*), to pay the amounts.' It was also necessary to make other provision for the duties heretofore performed by the

paymasters, as regarded the collections of 'fines and penalties, issues, deos, amers,' &c., &c., and it transferred all such duties to such officers of the constabulary force, as the inspector-general, with the approval of the chief secretary, should direct 'in that behalf,' &c. It also contained a section—the last in the Act—empowering all bodies imaginable (and unimaginable)—politic, corporate, collegiate, corporations aggregate or sole, tenants in tail, or for life, &c., &c., to make leases and demises, &c., &c., for the use of the constabulary, not only for themselves, but on behalf of their heirs and successors, and fully as many more *et cæteras*, including lunatics, and even issue yet unborn! But we must refer the curious in these matters to the clause in the Act itself, for a more satisfactory elucidation. This history has necessarily been too frequently incumbered with references to the technicalities of Acts of Parliament, to introduce too minutely anything of the kind, which can by any possibility be avoided.

Some few years were now allowed to elapse between the passing of the above Act and its next successor. In the meantime the constabulary advanced in usefulness and in the appreciation of the public. Tranquillity now prevailed from the Giant's Causeway to Cape Clear, and from Achill Head to Ireland's Eye, and it was thought that the constabulary had scarcely sufficient to do. The authorities seemed to forget one of their own pet maxims—'that the *absence of crime* proved the *vigilance* and *efficiency* of the *police*,' and was a satisfactory manifestation of their unremitting

attention to those duties for which they had been primarily called into existence. Their prompt willingness to meet all demands which could be made upon their time and intelligence was readily made use of by the authorities, and very many duties were, from time to time, added to their original and more legitimate obligations. For instance, they are now employed to take the census of the population every tenth year; to take agricultural statistics annually; to issue, and collect voting papers for the election of Poor-law guardians; to put in force the fishery laws, more particularly in the close season; to carry out the Vagrancy Act and the Towns' Improvement Act; to execute loan fund warrants; to act as inspectors of weights and measures; to see that all dogs in their different districts are duly registered. And they are also now charged with the suppression of illicit distillation, a very onerous and laborious duty in those districts where such a practice is still ventured on. From the readiness with which they adopted all these progressive additions to their more legitimate duties, it will be seen that the constabulary, like good servants, were willing 'to make themselves generally useful.' That they did so in fact, as well as in intention, there can be no doubt. Perhaps it was the *innate* tranquillity of the country which enabled the authorities to impose all these additional duties upon them; or, perhaps, it was that this tranquillity, arising out of their own efficiency, they were the means of thus saddling themselves with a multitude of new duties, which were altogether foreign to the purpose

for which they were originally organised. 'Be this as it may,' as is the proper phrase in such cases, they had now all these matters, and as many more, which have not been enumerated, to look after; and while this tranquillity prevails, it may be well just to advert to one or two more (short) Acts of Parliament respecting them.

Schedule A, annexed to the 11th and 12th of Vic., was found to be a very injudicious distribution of what was called in the returns, 'the parliamentary strength' of the counties. Indeed, the merest tyro in constabulary statistics, had he been consulted upon the subject, could have told those with whom the arrangement lay, that the total number of 'constables and sub-constables' for Donegal, one of the largest counties in Ireland, having been set at 176! was absurdly too low; while that for Louth—one of, if not the smallest county in Ireland—being fixed at 224, was as proportionably above the necessity as the other was below it.

There were other instances of misdistribution in the schedule, and it was consequently found necessary to pass an Act with a new schedule—the 20th and 21st of Vic., cap. 17, which added to the 'parliamentary strength' of some counties, while it reduced that of others, as in the instance just mentioned; for in the schedule annexed to the latter Act, we find Donegal set down for 326 instead of 176, while Louth is reduced from 224 to 189. This shows the consideration which these matters receive previous to experience. This last Act, anticipating the possibility of a further

redistribution becoming necessary, and not, perhaps, wishing to multiply Constabulary Acts of Parliament, whose name they feared was likely to become legion, added a clause to this Act, empowering the Lord Lieutenant to vary the distribution of the several counties, cities, and towns, &c., at the end of every fifth year, to such number as he, with the advice of the Privy Council in Ireland, might consider to be required for each such county, &c., &c., 'provided always,' that the total number of officers and men chargeable to the Consolidated Fund should not exceed the total numbers chargeable under the provisions of the 'said recited Act.'

It would appear, however, that no varying of the distribution of the force had been thought necessary by the Lord Lieutenant at the end of the fifth year, from the passing of the above Act, and none had, consequently, been made.

But a new difficulty soon after arose (which it will be necessary to refer to presently), and it was found that the distribution set forth in even that amended schedule would require further alteration.

There is another matter which first calls for our observation, as it is one of no minor importance in the internal constitution of the constabulary.

In August 1859, an Act was passed—the 22nd and 23rd of Vic., cap. 22—which made a great change in the heads of the department. By it one of the two deputy inspectors-general was to be permitted to lapse, upon the retirement or superannuation of either of the then existing deputy inspectors-general, and

from that forward there was to be only one. The remaining deputy was '*bound* to discharge *all* the duties which had theretofore been discharged by the said two deputy inspectors-general,' which provision of the Act clearly implied that there never had been any necessity for the second deputy. However, the next section of the Act empowered the Lord Lieutenant to appoint a third assistant inspector-general; and as the Constabulary Depôt in the Phoenix Park was placed under the command of one of these assistant inspectors-general, the designation of the officer holding such command, for the time being, was to be styled 'Commandant of the Depôt.'

The last section in this Act empowered the Lord Lieutenant to add the sum of £100 annually to one of the two remaining assistant inspectors-general, or, should he think fit, to divide it equally between them. We may observe that no Lord Lieutenant, since the passing of the Act, has ever been known to make two bites of a cherry.





CHAPTER XIII.

RETIREMENT OF SIR DUNCAN M'GREGOR—APPOINTMENT OF
HIS SUCCESSOR—SOME ALLEGATIONS AGAINST THE EFFI-
CIENCY OF THE CONSTABULARY.

SIR DUNCAN M'GREGOR had not waited for these arrangements. He seemed to have been quite satisfied with the services he had already rendered to the force, and the benefits which he had been the medium of conferring upon it. He considered it was now their turn to render him a service, and confer a benefit upon him. He 'put in' his twenty years upon the 1st of July 1858, which, by the 6th of Wm. IV., the Act under which he was appointed, entitled him to a retiring allowance equal to his full salary; 'that is to say,' as is a favourite expression of all Acts, a sum not exceeding £1500 a-year. Sir Duncan M'Gregor earned this handsome pension much easier than most men had done. The times, with the exception of Smith O'Brien's mad *escapade*, were tranquil and satisfactory, and Sir

Duncan felt quite at ease in the inspector-general's chair, which he occupied with unvarying affability, and his 'conciliatory smile,' as it was designated, *una voce*, from the senior officer to the junior recruit of the force, who might have occasion to seek his council, or receive his commands. Twenty years of this tranquil supervision of the force over which he had been unexpectedly placed in command, was sufficient for the gallant colonel—ten, fifteen, twenty years' additional service, would not have added one additional penny to his pension ; why then not retire at once into the bosom of his *otium cum dignitate*, while he was yet able to enjoy the freedom from which the restraint of a longer continuance in office would debar him ? Sir Duncan M'Gregor, therefore, very naturally 'sent in his papers,' and as soon as the matter could be arranged by the Treasury he made room for a successor,

And that successor was Henry John Brownrigg—afterwards Sir Henry—and we cannot hesitate to declare (and even he had his faults) that he was the ablest inspector-general who had ever occupied that position, since the constabulary was first constituted in its present, or, indeed, in any other form. He was sworn in as inspector-general on the 9th of October, 1858.

He had not been very long in office, when the astute and comprehensive qualities of his mind, upon the subject of what he had made his profession, were called into action, and he more than redeemed what might have been expected even from him. His defence of the constabulary, from allegations which

had become so notorious as to call for his interference, is perhaps the most convincing statement upon record, as meeting successfully every point of attack.

But it is necessary that we should be more particular. Allegations of a very serious nature against the efficiency of the constabulary became very fashionable about the year 1859, to go no farther back, and were bruited abroad, from one to another, by persons who mentioned it to others because it had been mentioned to them. These allegations chiefly consisted of the constabulary having assumed 'too military a character'—that they were too much from under the control of the local magistracy—and their general inefficiency with regard to the detection and punishment of crime, with many other minor accusations.

What those allegations were based upon, it would be hard to say, but it is an undoubted fact, that they had not obtained to any great extent, until after the period at which the new Enfield rifle was served out generally to the force. Prior to that, however, they had got the character with the public of being 'too military;' that their time was too much taken up with drill and field exercise to be compatible with their duties as peace officers, and very erroneous impressions were formed as to the manner in which their time was occupied in their 'military capacities,' rendering them ineffectual for their 'more proper police duties.' If a hay-rick was maliciously set on fire, and consumed, the owner thereof expected that the police of the district 'should have known that the outrage would have taken place, and that they should

have been on the watch, accordingly, to apprehend the perpetrators in the act ; or that, at least, they ought to have been on patrol at that exact spot, to prevent such wholesale destruction of property.' If a threatening letter was received through the post-office, 'surely it would not be too much to expect that a policeman, instead of being off at head-quarters of the district for drill, should be about the post-office, watching suspicious characters posting letters ; I don't know what on earth good they are.' These may appear absurd and overstated specimens of the observations which have been made in such cases, but they are literally true, and not only so, but they are mild examples of what could be advanced.

But the culminating point of the accusation of inefficiency against the constabulary, seems, as has been already intimated, to have been from the moment they were armed with the long rifle, and sword-bayonet. From that moment it appeared to the public, that it was quite *impossible* they *could be* efficient. 'Look at that fellow swaggering up the street, with his long sword, almost tripping him up at every step. I should like to see him in pursuit of an active chap who had committed a murder.'

'Aye,' replies the person addressed, 'or in pursuit of even a reel-footed cripple, to say nothing of an active man.'—Literal too !

But to be more serious. Circumstances arose about this time to give, as the public thought, more than a colouring to the charge of inefficiency, and many joined in the outcry.

In the month of February 1862, Mr. Fitzgerald was assassinated in the open day, upon the public road. Mr. Thibault had also been barbarously murdered in broad daylight, and a farmer named Michael M'Guire was also murdered in the open day. All these murders took place in the County Tipperary, and within a few days, it may be said, of each other. Three persons were ultimately apprehended for these murders, and a special commission was issued to try them. The person accused of the murder of Fitzgerald was convicted and executed, and his accomplice in the actual deed was so beset by the police, that he said, 'his life was not worth having,' and he gave himself up, was tried, convicted, and executed. But it was not from remorse or repentance for the crime he had committed that he gave himself up, but 'because he was so harassed and hunted by the police, that for weeks he had never lain two nights in the same place ; and as for sleep, he never got a wink, day or night, thinking they'd be a-top of him.'

Two of the conspirators to this murder, but who were not present at the deed, were afterwards apprehended, as was also a man who had harboured them after proclamation ; and they were all convicted, and executed. Yet, because it happened to be *daylight* when the murder was committed, the police, notwithstanding their subsequent successful exertions in bringing the perpetrators to justice, came in for a very unjust share of public censure.

The man who was tried for the murder of Mr. Thibault was acquitted ; the other prisoner, for the

murder of M'Guire, was discharged on his own recognisance, the evidence not being deemed sufficient by the Crown to go to trial on.

These three murders having taken place all in the open day, while the inhabitants of the districts were employed about their usual occupations, set not only the immediate neighbourhood, but the whole country into a state of excitement. The public mind became alarmed to an unusual extent, and it was very generally declared that the constabulary ought to have been aware that the murders were 'about to take place,' and to have prevented them! and their growing tendency to a 'military character' was again discussed, more particularly amongst the upper classes of society, the discussion always ending with such expressions as—'The government and the authorities may say what they will, but the constabulary are not what they ought to be, or what they used to be, as a police force, since they were armed with that long, unwieldy rifle, and their whole time taken up drilling;' 'and 'since they have been altogether released from the orders and control of the local magistrates,' adds a J.P.

It would appear that the grand jury of the county of Tipperary, assembled at the special commission adverted to, had imbibed the general impression, and had taken their tone from these discussions rather than from facts on the subject; for, during their deliberations they deemed it their duty to forward a resolution to the government, respecting the constitution of the constabulary force, to the following effect, that—

‘They considered it an imperative duty to call the attention of the government to the constitution and discipline of the constabulary force, with an earnest hope that they would take into their serious consideration how far that body fulfilled their mission as a preventive or detective police. That for some years past the constabulary had become more and more a military force, and in exact proportion as that system had been established, their usefulness and efficiency as a domestic force had been weakened and impaired.

‘The grand jury wished particularly to call the attention of the executive to three points :—First, That the members of the force are taught, not alone to look to their chief in Dublin, as the only source for promotion or reward, but that any expression of approval or recommendation from the local magistrates, no matter how well deserved, is a positive injury, and actual bar to professional preferment. Second, That the counties being divided into districts, no properly organised system of communicating intelligence of the commission of crime had been established between one district and another ;’ and *exempli gratia*, they instanced the fact, ‘that the murderous attack upon Colonel Knox, at Templemore, was not reported at Borrisoleigh station, only five miles distant, for twenty-four hours after the occurrence, and they *had no doubt* that a similar remissness took place in regard to the other stations in the vicinity. Third, That as the principal use of the police is to watch, and protect life and property in the rural districts, their recent equipment with a heavy

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and delicate weapon, such as the rifle and sword-bayonet, rendered it impossible for them to pursue a delinquent over a close or hilly country, and did not leave them the unincumbered use of their limbs in close conflict. The grand jury, however, were most anxious to record their opinion that the failure of the system was owing, not to the individuals, but to the military organization established at head-quarters.'

Aye—here was the tone and tenor of the discussions already adverted to, and in which many of the said grand jurors had been *particeps criminis*, openly and officially revived. The 'military appearance' of the constabulary was 'the head and front of their offending.'

These resolutions of the grand jury were sent by the Lord Lieutenant to Sir Henry Brownrigg, for his information and report. His report thereon occupies eight pages and a half of closely printed matter in reply. It would be out of place, and inconvenient to introduce the whole of even that portion of his statement here. It is contained *in extenso* from page 87 to 95 of his pamphlet, which was published in 1864, embracing a very able and elaborate defence against all the allegations which had been subsequently made, not only by the public, but by, at least, four of the going judges of assize in the spring of that year.

But even so far back as the summer assizes of 1859, the judge, in addressing the grand jury for the King's County, made use of the following observations:—
'Gentlemen of the grand jury, if I had merely to look to the calendar before me, I would have great reason

to congratulate you upon the state of your county. There appear upon the calendar six cases only. But I am sorry to tell you, gentlemen, that this circumstance is one of the very worst symptoms of the state of your county, for, upon inquiry, I have found that the quantity of unrepressed crime and outrage which has occurred in your county since the last assizes, is sixfold in comparison to the numbers that appear to have been made amenable. I need not say what an index this is to the state of your county. Now, gentlemen, you have, I presume, magistrates and police. I presume, too, that they know their duty. I do not know the purpose for which a police force is organised, if it be not to prevent crime and outrage. I am willing to believe that the persons to whom this duty has been delegated have attempted to perform it, but with respect to the results I regret to say, that they have been just such as if the duty had not been performed at all. I hope the purpose for which police-constables have been organised, and the usefulness of the office, have not been merged in the éclat and renown, to which, for some purpose or other, they may very laudably aspire—namely, the character of a military body ; but, unquestionably, the primary duty of the police-constable is that of an officer for preserving the peace of the country, and where he cannot preserve, of discovering, hunting out, tracing, and bringing to justice the offenders. I hope, gentlemen, that an increased diligence by the police in the discharge of their duties, and the consciousness that it will be for their own advantage to detect crime, will

induce them to leave no stone unturned to get at the root of the evil, and repress the crime which undoubtedly exists.'

The constabulary of the King's County appear either not to have deserved the censure thus poured out upon them by the judge, or to have profited by the advice with which he closed his remarks, for from that day to the present time there has been no repetition of the accusation against them.





CHAPTER XIV.

THESE ALLEGATIONS OFFICIALLY REFERRED TO, AND PLAINLY
REITERATED BY SOME OF THE GOING JUDGES OF ASSIZE—
SIR HENRY BROWNRIGG'S DEFENCE.

BUT other counties subsequently came in for a share of rebuke. Three judges followed suit so long after as 1864. The judge, in addressing the grand jury of the county of Roscommon, after having enumerated the number of crimes which had been committed since the previous assizes, remarked—‘These, gentlemen, are startling facts, and to my mind, there are only two causes to be assigned for it ; either the injured persons were unwilling to have recourse to justice from *fear* or *sympathy* ; or else, another cause might be, that the constabulary of the country, however efficient in other respects, may be deficient in that delicate part of their functions—the detection of crime. I greatly fear that there is more attention paid by the higher grades of the constabulary in making them a military force than in rendering them efficient in the discharge of their other duties.’

In the county of Cavan the judge also commented very sharply upon the amount of crime in the county, in which the perpetrators had not been made amenable. He did not mention by name the constabulary as being to blame for this, but his remarks could bear no other implication.

In the county of Limerick the judge went more boldly and less delicately to the point. He remarked as follows :—‘ I have been furnished by your county-inspector with his report of crime, committed since the last assizes, and I am struck with surprise at the numbers set down, for which no person has been made amenable, and others where the prosecution has been altogether abandoned. This gives rise to the question, who is to be looked to on that head? That question is one easily answered; in fact the answer at once presents itself—the constabulary. This I say is not at all creditable to them, and such a state of things should not be. In other places a similar want of efficiency has been complained of, as I read observations made by one of my brother judges now on circuit in another place, complaining that parties who committed crime had not been made amenable. I am not one of those who join in an unnecessary and unreasonable outcry against the constabulary. I know them to be an excellent body of men, and I should like to uphold their position for usefulness and efficiency; but it should not lie at their doors, that to their want of energy is attributable the non-punishment of offenders, who, in many instances, are known to be the perpetrators of crime.’

Up to the period when the judge charged the grand jury of the King's County, as has been set forth, the allegations against the constabulary were chiefly confined to discussions upon the subject of their inefficiency amongst private individuals, and after-dinner parties, where some unfortunate victim from whom a sheep had been stolen a few nights before formed one of the company ; and although some of the animadversions upon their occasional want of success may have reached Sir Henry Brownrigg's ears, they were not put forward in so tangible a manner as to call for any defence or notice on his part. Now it was a different thing. The judge's charge to the grand jury of the King's County was of too serious a nature, coming from such a source, not to be replied to by the inspector-general. To have been silent would have been to give consent, and Sir Henry felt that he was called upon to lay a formal report upon the subject before the government, and he did so at the time. The report referred to occupies three closely printed pages—81 to 83—of his subsequent pamphlet, which was evoked by the remarks of three of the going judges of assize in the spring of 1864.

But for the present we must revert to the King's County, of which we were speaking. It was much easier to give that portion of the judge's charge which cast censure upon the constabulary, than it would be to follow Sir Henry Brownrigg, *seriatim*, through his defence. We must, therefore, refer the reader to his pamphlet itself, but we may give the following extracts from it.

After bringing the matter forward by a reference to the judge's charge, Sir Henry compares the statement therein made with the actual cases for trial at the assizes. He goes on to say—'I must confess myself unable, from any reports in my possession, to understand upon what data was founded the statement, that the unrepressed serious crime of the country bears so large a proportion to the amount made amenable as ten, or even six to one.

'But having called upon the county-inspector for a return of all the outrages reported to have been committed within the period in question, I proceed to examine it in connexion with the comments of the judge, so far as these relate to an implied want of zeal on the part of the constabulary.

'It is true—but this is not peculiar to any particular county—that the cases on the calendar do not afford a *complete* picture of the state of the county in reference to crime, since the calendar comprises only "custody cases," and omits cases in which bail has been taken ; so neither does it afford a fair measure of the exertions, or even of the successful exertions of the police.

'The number of cases actually brought forward at the assizes in question was twelve, as will be seen in the annexed returns. No. 2 is a statement, which I think will show that the efforts of the police (who, it is important to observe, were engaged either as prosecutors or witnesses *in each of the cases tried*), have not been wanting, both in the detection and punishment of offenders, and that their efforts have been attended with a fair share of success.'

It will not be necessary to follow Sir Henry through the whole of his report upon this occasion. It is most convincing, and must be most satisfactory to every unbiassed mind. We have said that other judges followed suit, and we have given the cards they played at the spring assizes of 1864, soon after the constabulary had been served out with the long rifle and the *sword-bayonet*. The latter adjunct seemed to have given more cause for complaint, upon the part of the public, than even the rifle itself, as it was always severely dwelt upon in all discussions on the subject; and we do believe that there were, and perhaps still are, some persons so ignorant, as well as foolish, if they got a threatening letter with the picture of a coffin at the foot of it, to declare 'it was no wonder, while the police were armed with that ridiculous long rifle and *sword-bayonet* !'

As we have given extracts from the charges of the three other judges adverted to, it will be only fair if we cannot here introduce the whole of Sir Henry's statement in reply, at least to point out the course he adopted in refutation of such general charges as were made by the judges in question, and then refer the reader to the pamphlet itself, if they care to pursue the subject further.

Sir Henry, in meeting the allegation of inefficiency, remarks :—' It would seem that the revival of this complaint, at the present period of tranquillity, is owing to certain observations of some of the judges at the recent assizes, chiefly those of the counties of Cavan, Limerick, and Roscommon.

‘In considering this question, I will leave out of view the numerous collateral duties performed by the constabulary, because most of those who pronounce the force inefficient in the respect adverted to, frankly admit that it renders useful service to the public in other respects. I will not even now claim credit for its preventive efficiency—for the benefits resulting, directly and indirectly, from its presence in the country—in preserving the peace at markets, fairs, and elections—in averting angry collisions between parties and factions, and otherwise. Passing by valuable services rendered, and beneficial influence exercised, I am willing to bring the present question within the narrowest limits, and to inquire simply—though this is the position least advantageous to the force—can it be fairly said of the constabulary as a body, that it is inefficient in making offenders amenable, and that the failure of justice, in so far as it does fail, is to be laid to its charge, either as regards its inactivity, or its peculiar constitution?’

Sir Henry having then set forth the principal allegations laid to the charge of the constabulary, in the charges of the three judges referred to, and which have already been quoted if not *in extenso*, at least sufficiently so for our purpose, continues to remark—‘Now it appears to me, that the use which has been made of these observations was not that for which they were uttered. With the exception of a single reference at Roscommon to the military character of the force, and a passing allusion to it at Limerick, the design of the judges, it may be fairly presumed,

was not to condemn the organisation of the constabulary, but to give a solemn public expression of detestation of a certain class of offences, and by calling upon the officers of justice to use increased exertions for the detection of the offenders, to warn and deter from similar practices.

‘But I must still observe, that it is not fair to reason from three counties to the whole of Ireland, nor from the impunity of certain offenders to a sweeping charge of general police inefficiency. It is but reasonable to take the whole case into consideration, and to regard it in all its bearings, before judgment is pronounced. If one of these statements be admitted, the whole should be, and as the matter is of importance, I take leave to complete the case, by collecting the testimony of the judges, as respects the remaining twenty-nine counties.’

Sir Henry then gives extracts from the charges of the other judges, in each of the remaining counties. It would be tedious—if it were not altogether a work of supererogation, to follow him *seriatim* through the whole. Suffice it to say, that in every instance where the constabulary formed any portion of their observations, it was in terms of the highest approbation of their exertions. We may, however, introduce an extract from one or two, as they not only alluded to what had been said on other circuits, but did so for the express purpose of expressing their dissent therefrom. In one county the judge remarked—‘Now, in reference to those cases in which punishment did not follow, I think I may exculpate the constabulary

from any blame or neglect. I ought, before passing by the constabulary, gentlemen, possibly to make one further observation upon it, more especially as, at the present time, serious charges have been made against that force, and when it has been alleged generally that they are inefficient. I must say, that is an opinion in which I do not agree. I have had very large experience of that body, both during five years when I had the honour of being one of the law advisers of the Crown, and after a judicial experience of eight successive assizes, I confess that the impression left upon my mind, and the opinion I formed upon the constabulary (whether I regard them as endeavouring to preserve the public peace, or in bringing offenders to justice), was, that it could not, and that it cannot be fairly said, that the force is inefficient. On the contrary, I should describe it as zealous and efficient, especially when you take into account that there are parts of this country in which impediments are thrown in the way of administering justice, and in the way of discovering criminals.'

Hear another, who after referring to a return of crime, and the number of offenders made amenable, says:—'I think it is due to the constabulary of this county to say, that the comparison indicates very great vigilance and diligence on their part.'

Again, hear one more, and we shall have done with this portion of the subject. 'With respect to the several crimes committed, the perpetrators of which have not been made amenable, the reasons for non-detection appear to be, that the injured parties do not

wish to bring those who have committed the crimes against them to justice, and, accordingly, are not willing to give information, although they may be perfectly aware who the offenders are. Now, it is not at all fair to blame the constabulary for not bringing those parties to justice. So, though in other counties judges had thought it right to find fault with the constabulary for not doing their duty, I really do not see anything before me that would call upon me to join in such a censure.'

The other judges, if they did not allude so pointedly to what had taken place 'in other counties,' at least did not consider that they had any cause to condemn the constabulary, and their observations were more commendatory than otherwise.

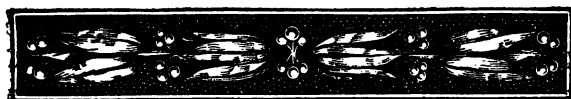
But we must not weary the reader—which, by the way, we have some fears we may have already done—upon the subject of those famous charges. Sir Henry was most effective and complete in his defence of the constabulary against them.

Hitherto, the bringing of the mind and the eye to bear together upon what are called 'police duties' was left to fancy or to chance—to what may be called the 'mere routine influence' inseparable from a man's position as a police constable; but, happily, the character of the force does not now require such able advocacy as was at the above period expended upon it. Another order of things prevails; another system of acquiring a knowledge of their 'police duties' is being instilled into the minds of the men, particularly into those of the younger and rising members. Such

allegations as those referred to have not only passed away, but good proofs are every day 'cropping up'—we believe that is the modern phrase—of police detections, so that even the suspicion of inefficiency does not now exist.

Added to this, the 'querulists' will be glad to learn that the *long* rifle and *sword* bayonet, of which they had such a horror, have been called in, and the force has been furnished with the *short* Snider carbine and bayonet.





CHAPTER XV.

THE MILITARY CHARACTER AND TENDENCY OF THE CONSTABULARY CONSIDERED.

WHILST Sir Henry grappled so successfully with this, the most serious charge of inefficiency, he did not leave unexposed the vague and unmeaning charge of the constabulary being 'too military.' With respect to this allegation, he says—'It is not, however, easy to deal with a mere general statement. When a definite proposition is advanced, it can be considered, and approved or rejected. But when, as is not unfrequently the case, it is said that the constabulary are "too military," the exact amount of meaning intended to be conveyed is not very apparent.

'If, for example, it were alleged that the Irish constabulary should cease to be grouped together in barracks, and live indiscriminately amongst the people—that they should cease to be under authority and control, and go where, and do what should seem good

to themselves—that they should cease to wear a uniform, and dress as they pleased—or that they should cease to carry arms, and be served out with walking-sticks—such propositions would at least have the merit of being intelligible.

‘But what is meant by the force being “too military?”—too military for what, and in what respects too military?’

‘If it means that they are not civilians—that the duties they are employed upon are not of a purely civil nature; that those duties have any resemblance to those of the military, or that the existing organisation is not adapted to the state of things in this country, then I am persuaded that every one really conversant with the subject will be prepared with me to deny the allegation.’

Again—‘There is no reason to fear that the constabulary force, as at present constituted, and at present governed, will ever merge into a mere military body. Everything is against such a contingency—true, they live in barracks, they wear a uniform, they are armed and equipped, and they are taught the field exercise, but there the resemblance ends.

‘And is this military appearance which some complain of an unmitigated evil? Has it no tendency to deter from breaches of the peace, or to impart confidence to the well disposed? Is it nothing to have visible proof that the constabulary can, upon occasion, assemble in strength, and oppose the concentrated force of a disciplined, armed body, to the movements of an ill-organised rabble.’

How prophetic of the fact, which some short time after put these queries to the proof, was the above statement of Sir Henry Brownrigg!

We find that it is impossible to do Sir Henry's defence the justice it deserves, without extending our extracts too far, and we are obliged, therefore, to take those which we give almost at random, but, indeed, we could scarcely go wrong.

Sir Henry goes on to show, that amongst the members there was no aping of, or longing for a military life. He says—'The force has, indeed, been remarkably free from a military mania. The men composing it are of a different stamp from those of the army. They are attached to their own corps, and accustomed to its peculiar duties, for which they acquired a predilection. No attempt to recruit for the army from the constabulary (even for crack regiments) has ever been successful. The effort made during the Crimean war to obtain from the constabulary volunteers for the Guards, even with the advantage of carrying with them their constabulary service, was a failure, and was received by the men with a feeling nearly approaching to merriment!'

In this last sentence Sir Henry was more correct than he was perhaps aware of at the time, or we are sure he would have substituted the word '*quite*' for '*nearly*,' for we happen to know that a certain member of the force was so struck with the failure of the project of recruiting from the constabulary for 'the Guards,' that he amused his leisure hours one night he was 'barrack orderly,' in composing a song upon

the subject, to the tune of 'The Irish Jaunting Car,' an air which Valentine Vousden was immortalizing about that time.

There were six verses when the song was complete, as we first saw it; but we shall only give one or two at random, as a specimen of the ridicule with which the project was looked upon by the force.

Any person who has a recollection of Vousden's song of 'The Irish Jaunting Car,' will at once perceive the closeness with which both the air and the idea were carried out in this song, which was called 'The Irish Guards.'

The first verse opened the subject thus—

I.

'Do you want recruits, your honor, we are just the boys for you;
If you could only hook us, we're exactly what would do.
We are what they call the Peelers, and a finer set of men
You couldn't find to travel round the world, and back again.
We belong to the Constabulary, and you must play your cards
Much better ere you coax us for to list into the Guards.'

Talking of the penny a-day for beer, which was held out as an inducement to the men, he says—

IV.

'Whoever struck that ration out had very little wit
To think a *penny* worth of beer a peeler's mug would fit;
And if he was in Ireland, oh! dear, how he'd have laughed
To see a peeler drinking fourpence-hap'ny at a draught.
The man that did it's stationed at a place called Newtownards;
Such men I think would soon dry up the beer-can of the Guards.'

The song from which these verses have been taken made a great noise at the time, particularly amongst

the force, and more than justifies Sir Henry's expression of the merriment with which the attempt was received.

We must now express a hope that we have not dwelt at unnecessary length upon those allegations which were brought against the constabulary. Not to have touched upon them at all would have had the appearance of having suppressed them through favour or affection ; and having introduced the subject, which, as impartialists we were bound to do, we were obliged to deal with it at greater length than may have been palatable to the taste of the general reader.

This pamphlet was the last act of Sir Henry in defence of those with whom he had spent the best days of his life, and it proved alike not only the interest he retained in their credit and welfare to the last, but how well he had made himself acquainted with all the intricacies of a force so peculiarly constituted. To unbiassed minds it must be the most convincing statement ever made in controversion of unjust and prejudiced accusations.

He sent in his papers for pension in 1865, and retired on the 1st of May in that year. He was succeeded as inspector-general by Colonel Stewart Wood, C.B., who had been for nearly five years previously deputy inspector-general.





CHAPTER XVI.

SERIOUS AND CONTINUED RIOTS IN BELFAST—DIFFICULTY OF
RESTORING PEACE—COMMISSION APPOINTED TO INQUIRE
INTO THE POLICE SYSTEM OF THAT BOROUGH.

WE may now fairly revert to the matter alluded to some pages back, before the unpopularity and the defence of the constabulary became the subject of this history. That is to say, the circumstances which arose, making it necessary further to vary the redistribution of the parliamentary strength of the constabulary, within the counties and cities throughout Ireland.

The matter with which we have now to deal, is the inefficient manner in which the peace of the town of Belfast had hitherto been attempted to be kept. Sectarian feeling had been always bitterly exercised between the respective religious parties in that city, and the existence of mutual rancour was always the cause of riot and outrage, breaking out upon the most trivial excuse to such an extent, as

not only to endanger, but to be the source of the actual sacrifice of human life in very many instances.

The city of Belfast, with its mayor, town council, magistracy, and its 'local police,' was miserably incompetent to deal with sectarian outrage, when the spark had set the northern flax on fire. Occasionally an extra force of the constabulary had been sent to Belfast, not so much to preserve as to restore the peace of the town; for the mischief had been too often done before they arrived.

In the case, however, to which we have now to advert, viz.: the sudden and extensive riots of August 1864, the superiority of the very presence of the constabulary over the existing system, was expected to work a miracle in producing tranquillity, and a considerable reinforcement was despatched with, as it afterwards turned out, an ill-judged confidence in their influence and powers. At the period the steam was at high pressure on both sides, and notwithstanding that the large number of four hundred constabulary, three hundred infantry of the 84th regiment, and two troops of hussars, had been poured into the town, they failed during several days to prevent a repetition of riot and bloodshed, which could hardly have been excused between rival tribes of red Indians. A Roman Catholic chapel and a female penitentiary were attacked and demolished by the Protestants, irrespective of the sacredness of the building in the one case, or the fact that the other was occupied by unoffending females, the greater portion of them young girls. In retaliation for this,

the Protestant and Presbyterian school-houses were attacked by the Roman Catholic party, the windows and doors demolished, the furniture smashed to fragments, and the scholars, amounting to upwards of four hundred males and females, many of them of tender age, hunted in a state of terror to the four winds of heaven by the infuriated mob. Shops were plundered in the broad and open day the moment the sections of the respective mobs found the constabulary or military engaged elsewhere. In short, the whole town of Belfast was in a state of excitement and alarm, far exceeding anything of a like nature which had occurred for years. Many persons on both sides were armed, and shots, amounting in some instances to volleys, were fired. Several lives were lost, besides a great number being wounded and mutilated.

At the end of eleven days of this fearful commotion, the embers of the distressing conflict of religious rancour began to die out, if not altogether from the vigilance and exertions of those who had been endeavouring to quell them, it might be said from sheer exhaustion, and peace was so far restored that a renewal of actual riot and outrage ceased to be apprehended, and matters gradually returned to a civilised phase of society.

But the possibility, if not the probability—the probability, if not the certainty, of a recurrence of such scenes, was now lying heavily upon the minds of the government, and they were ashamed of the scrutiny with which the public began to stare them in the face.

They were tired of these periodical outbreaks, and determined to seek repose from a repetition of them by some effectual means. It struck them that the most judicious step to adopt, in the first instance, would be to appoint a commission to inquire into the existing local arrangements for the preservation of the peace in the borough of Belfast. The report of the commissioners would be the most satisfactory foundation for whatever measures they might subsequently adopt, and, accordingly, they issued their warrant on the 3rd of November 1864, appointing Charles R. Barry and Richard Dowse, Esqrs., barristers-at-law, their commissioners, to make inquiry into the said matters, and to report thereon.

These commissioners entered upon their very important inquiry upon the 12th of November, and followed it up uninterruptedly, Sundays of course excepted, until the 7th of December following, upon which day they closed their proceedings.

That the subject matters of a great portion of their inquiry would, to some men, have been of a delicate nature, may be easily supposed. Cautiously as the terms for the inquiry were worded, they seemed to contain implications which, in other hands than those of the gentlemen to whom the inquiry was committed, might have been examined into in a manner which would, at least, have presupposed a charge of partiality in the discharge of a public duty. But while these gentlemen went straightforward, and boldly, to the root of the existing evil, whatever it was, it has been universally acknowledged that they exercised their

powers with a tact and consideration for the position and feelings of those into whose conduct, we may say, they were obliged to scrutinise, which left nothing to be wished for by either the town council or by individual officials.

It will not be necessary for our purpose, to follow this report through all the revelations which it brought to light, as to the frightful scenes of riot, and outrage, and even murder, which continued to rage from the 8th of August until the 19th, when the last man, named Smith, was shot. The whole town was not 'a scene only,' but a series of scenes, of the most deplorable outrage and disorder, all arising from the rancour existing between the Protestant and Roman Catholic parties.

The melancholy results of these abominable scenes arose out of the simple fact, that a site for a testimonial to O'Connell had been fixed upon and inaugurated in Dublin, on the 8th of August. That this object in itself was perfectly legal, and natural for those to engage in who had admired and thought like the great, departed liberator, there cannot be a second opinion ; but that it was carried out, both in the spirit and in the letter, in direct violation of the existing law, there can be as little doubt. Be this as it may, the Protestants of Belfast looked upon it as a matter, the mode at least of carrying out which should not have been permitted by the authorities. 'Feeling,' as one of them has since admitted to us, 'that the government was slumbering on its post, or, if awake, was too timid to assert the supremacy of the

law against *that* party, while, upon the merest pretence, they would be but too prompt to put it in motion against *theirs*,' they determined upon a counter demonstration amongst themselves, and resolved to burn an effigy of O'Connell, and a Protestant mob, to the number of about four thousand, assembled for that purpose.





CHAPTER XVII.

LABOURS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMISSIONERS—
THE TOWN FINALLY HANDED OVER TO THE CONSTABULARY.

BELFAST is not what is called 'a county of a city,' or a 'county of a town,' and, therefore, had no constabulary allocated to it, as such, in the manner of Cork, Limerick, Galway, and some others. It had, however, a portion of the constabulary of the county Antrim stationed in the town of Belfast proper, and a portion of the constabulary of the county Down, stationed in a small suburb called Ballymacarret, which is divided from its parent, so to speak, by the river Logan, which is the boundary between the two counties.

Such being the geographical position of the town, and the existing arrangements respecting the constabulary in it, the commissioners entered upon their investigation as to these riots, and the consequences resulting from them. They were directed by their warrant, 'to inquire into the existing local

arrangements for the preservation of the peace of the borough ; the magisterial jurisdiction exercised within it, the amount and constitution, and efficiency of the police force usually available there,'—this did not allude to or include the constabulary—'the proceedings taken by the magistrates and other local authorities towards the prevention, or suppression of the said riots and disturbances ; and whether those authorities and the existing police force were adequate to the future maintenance of order and tranquillity within the borough ; or whether any, and what changes ought to be made in the local, magisterial, and police jurisdiction and arrangements, with a view to the better preservation of the public peace, and the prevention, or prompt suppression of riot and disorder.

Such were the terms of the inquiry, and they gave ample scope for the labours of the commissioners, and a perusal of their report will satisfy the reader, that they went, as we have said, boldly and straightforwardly to the performance of their work. After twenty-one days' close application, and the examination of one hundred and twenty-one witnesses, they completed their task. Nothing could be more judicious than the course which they adopted, in order to arrive at a justifiable, if not a satisfactory conclusion, upon each of the important points included in the programme of their inquiry. They examined the mayor and several of the ex-mayors of Belfast ; the magistrates who had been engaged in suppressing, or rather endeavouring to suppress, the riots ; several aldermen

and town councillors of the borough, amongst whom were the then chairman of the police committee, as well as some of his predecessors in that office ; many of the wealthiest mill-owners, manufacturers, and traders, owners of house and other property, in the borough ; also clergymen of all persuasions, ministering in the town and neighbourhood. These witnesses must have been presumed, both in their official and personal capacities, to have had the deepest interest in the prosperity, order, and security of the town. Their social and commercial stations were guarantees for their intelligence and knowledge of the subject, and they represented every shade of religious and political opinions. A number, also, of military and civil officers were likewise examined, who had been engaged in endeavouring to suppress the riots.

On the 8th of March, the commissioners sent in their report to the Lord Lieutenant, and it may be shortly stated that it was altogether opposed to the existing state of affairs in Belfast, as regarded the inefficiency and other objectionable points in the constitution and arrangements of its local police. The report recommended very extensive and important alterations, the *ultimatum* of which was, that the whole of the then existing system should at once be done away with, and that the preservation of the peace of Belfast, should be handed over to the constabulary.

The carrying out of the recommendations of this report, would require a special Act of Parliament, as it involved many important matters, which could not be

accomplished by a mere handing up of the town, with its mixed and excitable population, to the constabulary.

The 28th & 29th Vic., cap. 70, was, therefore, passed upon the 29th of June following. After the usual 'whereas,' the very first section made a complete sweep of the entire existing police force of Belfast. From and after the passing of that Act, it was not lawful for the town council to appoint or maintain any police force whatever, and all chief-constables, inspectors, constables, and other officers of the local police, ceased to hold their offices; and the constabulary then in the town of Belfast, were to have, and discharge all the powers and duties which, up to the passing of the Act, had been discharged by the local police force. This Act suddenly threw the duties which had been so ineffectually performed by about one hundred and six 'locals' upon the shoulders of not more than thirty-six of the constabulary. But the Irish constabulary are a broad-shouldered set, and as usual, they were equal to the occasion. They were masters of the moment, and during the intermediate time, before the arrangements contemplated could be completed, there was not a whimper of a riot or outrage in the town.

The number of constabulary then and previously in Belfast, would be manifestly too few permanently to cope with the additional and important duties which were now about to devolve upon them; and without increasing the aggregate number in Ireland, a fresh redistribution became necessary, in order that

Belfast should be supplied with a sufficient number effectually to preserve the peace. A new schedule was therefore annexed to the Act, by which some of the smaller (and the best behaved) counties, were reduced, in various proportions, to a total amount amongst them of 130 men, this being the *minimum* number allocated by the Act to Belfast. In case, however, that this number might not be found sufficient, the Act empowered the Lord Lieutenant at any time to add to it any number of men, not exceeding 320, which he might think fit, to provide for the more effectual preservation of the peace. Any additional number of men so appointed were, with the 130 at first allocated, to constitute 'the ordinary constabulary force of the town.' Curiously enough, however, notwithstanding the words, 'shall constitute the ordinary constabulary force of the said town,' the Act was determined not to allow the town council of the borough of Belfast to escape scatheless in the matter as regarded 'the expense,' for it provided that one moiety of the expense of the said additional force, or any portion thereof, should be paid by the town council of the borough, by means of rates, apportioned and levied in the same manner as the moneys which had been hitherto raised for the maintenance of a local police force. And this, notwithstanding that the very first section in the Act rendered it *unlawful* for the town council to maintain *any police whatever* !

The officers for the town of Belfast, by this Act, were to consist of one inspector, who was to be designated 'the inspector of constabulary for the town of

Belfast,' and two or more sub-inspectors. These officers were to be provided from the number of county and sub-inspectors already existing in Ireland. It will be seen, therefore, that they were not appointments *de novo*, but translations, as we might say, if we were speaking of the Church. But they had the effect of creating vacancies at the *foot* of the respective classes to which they had belonged, which was an advantage to so many young fellows who were looking for cadetships. The inspector's salary was to be £400 a-year, to be *wholly* defrayed by the town council of the borough, and this expense was to be included in the certificate to be furnished by the Inspector-General of constabulary under the previous section, and to be raised and paid in the manner therein directed.

The Inspector-General was directed also to fix the number of men who were to discharge the duties of a night-watch, not exceeding one hundred and fifty men, and for these men an additional sum of sixpence per *diem—noctem* we think the Act ought to have said—might be charged, which was also to be *wholly* defrayed by the town council, and to be included by the Inspector-General in his certificate.

Notwithstanding any regulations requiring persons entering the constabulary force to be unmarried, and over and under a certain age, the Act directed the Inspector-General to admit into the said force any constable of the local force who had been superseded, and whose age should not exceed forty years, and who, within one calendar month after such notification in

the *Dublin Gazette*, should apply to be admitted, provided he was in other respects eligible, according to the regulations. We are not able to say how many, if any, applied to be so admitted.


The tenth section gave the town council of the borough *permission* to superannuate any inspector, head, or other constable of the local police force, whose office had ceased by the passing of the Act, and to grant them such adequate compensation, by way of yearly allowance or gratuity, as should to them seem fit, provided always that such compensation should be *wholly* charged on and defrayed out of the local funds, which the said council had authority to levy. This has the appearance of *great consideration* on the part of the Act of Parliament, and no doubt the town council's comment upon it was something like 'Thank you for nothing !'

This closes the Belfast department of our history, and we need only add, that since the passing of the Act in question, and the consequent handing over of that important and excitable borough solely to the jurisdiction and vigilance of the constabulary, no riot or outrage whatever has taken place, proving that no false estimate of the influence of this force with all classes of the community had been formed. Neither would the estimate of their powers have been less correct had they been called upon to deal with the population, in its worst phase of riot and disturbance, in sufficient time.



CHAPTER XVIII.

DISSATISFACTION OF THE FORCE FROM THE INADEQUACY
OF THE PAY—INSPECTOR-GENERAL'S PROPOSITIONS FOR
AMELIORATING THEIR CONDITION—COMMISSION APPOINTED
TO INQUIRE.

E have now followed 'the constabulary force' as closely as was practicable, over a period of upwards of forty years, and yet our task is not finished. Fortunately, however, what remains to be reviewed of their course will be free from the dryness and technicalities of Acts of Parliament, a vast number of which we have been obliged to wade through. That was not our fault; the necessity was inseparable from an institution, the various requirements of which experience alone could suggest, and which was found to admit of almost annual improvement. And it is not yet perfect—far from it.

However, we can get on more agreeably now, and with less references to Williams and Victorias than in the period of our apprenticeship; and although we may be supposed to be now nearly 'out of our time,'

yet have we still the most important matters connected with the constabulary to bring under the reader's notice.

About this period a general dissatisfaction appears to have sprung up in the force as to the inadequacy of the pay. Provisions of all kinds rated at nearly double the price they had held but a few years previously ; and certainly fully double, if not more so, than when the rates of pay were at first apportioned to the several ranks. This fact affected the force, not only as regarded the comfort and living of those who could not separate themselves from it, but in two other most material points, causing a great defalcation in the usual and necessary numbers in the lower ranks. Young, able-bodied men, who had but from five to six years' service, but in some cases still longer, 'resigned their time,' as was the expression, and emigrated to Australia or America, where those belonging to them were 'earning heaps of money.' A vast improvement had manifested itself in the social and agricultural state of the country, and the price of labour rose in the market to more than double what it had been even within a short time, and some of the junior members of the force resigned, not even from the temptation of the 'almighty dollar,' but at the solicitation of their fathers to go home : 'Tom is in resate of three-and-sixpence a day, besides mate and dhrink, an' what id keep Mick in the peelers ?'

If this state of things induced a vast number of young men to resign, it had also the effect of rendering the monthly return of candidates for the constabulary almost uniformly '*nil*.' Recruits would not join

the force who could earn more, and that quietly, at home, 'without fear or dhread of any kind.'

The consequence of all this was, that the force fell much below par as to its proper and necessary number. The counties were crying out to the depôt for men to fill vacancies, while the depôt replied—'send us recruits;' and a general complaint of the diminution of the force prevailed.

It was natural that this state of things should engage, not only the attention, but the utmost anxiety of the Inspector-General. He saw the justness of the cause, and felt the reasonableness of the result, and, as a matter of course, he 'laid the pipes' for a remedy. In June 1865, just one month after he had been appointed, he submitted a report to the government upon the subject, with some very decided recommendations as to an increase of pay, but it had not the desired effect. Seeing that matters were not mending, but rather the reverse, he submitted a second report in the November following, laying the existing circumstances, and the consequent difficulties he had to contend with, in a still more urgent manner before the government. In both of these reports the Inspector-General recommended a considerable increase to the long-service pay of the men in each rank, while he strongly recommended that a certain number of the older county and sub-inspectors, having over thirty-eight years' service, should be permitted to retire, carrying their long-service pay with them as a portion of their pension. Nothing could be more reasonable than the whole of the recommendations contained

in these reports; and it is very much to be regretted that the Lords of the Treasury did not embrace them at once. The scales of pay laid down therein do not differ materially from those subsequently adopted by the commissioners; and had his suggestion respecting the retiring allowance of some of the older county and sub-inspectors been carried out, it would, undoubtedly, have been 'a step in the right direction,' not only as regards those old and faithful officers, but with respect to the efficiency of the force itself. The Treasury, however, did not act upon the Inspector-General's recommendations, although strongly urged to do so by the Lord Lieutenant. They preferred issuing a commission 'to inquire into the state of the constabulary force of Ireland, with respect to their pay and allowances, strength, and organization, classification, conditions of service, and system of superannuation; and with reference to the causes which at that time led to the large number of vacancies in the body.'

Connected as we are with the constabulary, we wish to speak with all deference and respect of this commission, but we confess that we are of those who do not think it was at all necessary. The Government and the Lords of the Treasury, through their Chief-Secretary, had the fullest and the most trustworthy information possible before them, from the Inspector-General's reports of June and November. Nothing could be more clearly and convincingly set forth than the matters which required consideration and redress; and nothing could be fairer or more reasonable than the suggestions in both these reports

for their remedy. Had the Lords of the Treasury acted upon them, backed as they were by the urgent recommendations of the Lord Lieutenant, no material difference would have resulted in the expense between the propositions of the Inspector-General and the final adjustment of the matter by the report of the commissioners—nay, were we to enter into arithmetical calculations, we are of opinion that the total of increased expense would be lower in the Inspector-General's plan than in that resulting from the commissioners' report, and the enormous expense of the said commission would have been saved, and ought, therefore, to be placed to the credit of the Inspector-General's proposition.

But there were matters which the Lords of the Treasury thought it would be well to examine into, besides those which had been so urgently brought before them, as the terms of the inquiry will show, and they issued their commission accordingly.

Thirty-six witnesses were examined, some of them at great length. For instance, the Inspector-General's examination extended over a course of eight hundred and twenty-seven questions. Altogether there were four thousand four hundred and eleven queries put to the thirty-six witnesses. The commissioners appear to have been very painstaking all through, and the final result of their labours was afterwards embodied in an Act of Parliament, and became law. It may be said to have amounted to this: that a considerable increase was made in the pay of men entering the force as recruits; all long-service pay was done away

with, and an equivalent addition made to the regular salary. The recommendation that the promotion from the ranks to the position of sub-inspector, should at least be doubled, was done with a hope of giving a spur to the recruiting, which was at that time at a very low ebb.

Some of the third-class sub-inspectors gained an increase of about £12 a-year for a while, but the senior officers gained nothing whatever, except that the £2 per cent. which they had been hitherto paying to the superannuation fund, the Treasury took upon themselves, adding, however, £1 per cent. from the officers to the 10s. per cent. which they paid to the reward fund. This *saved* the first-class county-inspectors, none of whom could have less than thirty years' service, and many of them considerably more—£2, 10s. a-year—and so proportionably down the ladder! These matters, with an allowance of £100 a-year to the Inspector-General to forage a horse, were, we may say, the principal, if not the only alterations, resulting from this commission.

However, we have not entered very minutely into detail upon the subject; but we do not, and we cannot, agree in the views taken by the commissioners upon many of the points which they laid their heads together to discuss, nor do we coincide in many of the recommendations of their report. We are ourselves too closely connected with the results which have since become law, to enable us to discuss them as freely as we would wish, without, perhaps, subjecting ourselves to the charge of a self-interested bias in

the expression of our opinion. We will, therefore, make no further observations upon the subject, but to reiterate our regret, that the Lords of the Treasury did not act upon their own responsibility, and at once adopt the recommendations of the Inspector-General ; or, that having deemed it desirable to issue a commission, that the commissioners did not fall in with his views and suggestions, and that before he fruitlessly offered a compromise of what he felt that the officers were justly entitled to.

It is to be hoped that ere long the government may be led to take a more just and liberal view of some matters which still call for a remedy, and pass an Act for the purpose ; for instance, one which would secure to some (even a few) of the older officers—many of them with upwards of forty years' service, with unblemished characters—the well-earned pension of their *full pay*. This was not only contemplated, but secured to them in the Act under which they were appointed, and further secured to them under *every subsequent* Act which had been passed. In August 1866, by the 29th and 30th of Vic., cap. 103, the long-service pay was done away with, while a proportionate addition was made to the regular salary ; but a clause was inserted, with the intention of cutting off the addition from officers who had been *previously* appointed when retiring upon pension.

Although we have not been bred to the law, we have been present at the elucidation of very knotty points, and we are of opinion, that were the Lords of the Treasury so disposed, they could, even under that

very section of the Act, grant the full amount of their *present salaries* to any officers whom they chose. But the commissioners intended that it should not be so, and while they cut off the long-service pay portion (which is now actual salary) from officers previously appointed, they permit the whole of the salaries, of which the long-service pay forms a portion, to be the basis of calculation for the pension of officers *thereafter* appointed, thus denying that small but just advantage to those who have already borne the heat and burden of the day.

As we have said, however, we think the Lords of the Treasury can at any moment rectify this part of the matter without any further Act of Parliament, even under the construction of the commissioners' clause adverted to. If not, we hope the Chief Secretary will see the justice of bringing in a short bill to remedy so great a hardship.





CHAPTER XIX.

HOW THE SMOULDERING EMBERS OF FENIANISM WERE SUPPOSED TO HAVE BEEN REKINDLED — JAMES STEPHENS' CAREER FROM THE BATTLE OF FARRINRORY TO THE PERIOD OF HIS ESCAPE FROM RICHMOND PRISON.

HAVING now brought the reader through a vast quantity of what, if he is not connected, either directly or indirectly with the constabulary, must have been to him stale, flat, and unprofitable, let us, while we thank him for his patience and long-suffering—we had nearly written 'long-service pay'—let us introduce him to the brightest phase in which that force can claim to be remembered.

It can hardly be out of place shortly to refer to Smith O'Brien's mad and futile rebellion, for the purpose of connecting its dying embers with the spark which had not been totally extinguished in the heart of at least one of his *aids-de-camp* at Farrinrory.

Whether it was that James Stephens' undying hate of British rule was innate in the essence of his being,

or had been perpetuated in his breast for vengeance, by the 'gun-shot wound' which he had received in the leg in that memorable 'battle,' is of little consequence. There the spark lay smouldering, but not dead, ready for the first breath of patriotic air to fan it to a blaze. The wound does not appear, from subsequent facts, to have been severe. He was helped from where he fell, 'with his martial cloak around him,' by some of his 'co-belligerents,' who had pluck enough to expose themselves within the range of the constabulary carbine (it was then), while they lifted him up and carried him 'to the rear.' It was widely reported that he had died of the wound; at all events *he was buried*, and we were assured by a person *who was there* that he had '*a very fine funeral!*'

His subsequent escape, however, to France, as a lady's maid, almost immediately after, proved that he could not have been very long under the care of the surgeon of his regiment, and that his death and funeral were like a certain '*squire*,' of whom everybody has lately heard so much.

O'Mahony and Doheny also escaped to France about the same time; indeed it might be said they were 'in the same boat' with Stephens, whether they actually sailed with him or not.

For a few years from that period James Stephens' time cannot be clearly accounted for, but that he was of the same mind all through subsequent facts incontestably prove. O'Mahony and he spent some time in Paris, where they either got up or joined a political club, with a view of perfecting themselves in the

mysteries of how secret organisation was carried on in France. But the French police proved too vigilant for them to make much progress in learning their lesson. The members of the club found it prudent to disperse, and Stephens and 'The O'Mahony' decamped for America. Stephens, some time after, seems to have left his friend to work out the organising system alone in that country, and to have returned to his native land, not now as a learner, but as a teacher, for we find him in 1856 *teaching French!* at a ladies' school at Killarney. He seems, indeed, to have been an itinerant teacher—*quere of what?*—in that neighbourhood for some time. We find him not long after earning his bread as a tutor in more than one respectable family in the vicinity of Dublin. In 1858 he appears to have devoted all his energies to 'teaching the young ideas how to shoot,' after rather a physical than an intellectual manner, for he again wandered to the south of Ireland, where he sedulously employed his time and faculties in the organisation of the Fenian conspiracy.

Fenianism up to this was only another name for what had been known in Ireland as 'the Phoenix Society,' and for a considerable time its development was slow and uninteresting, even to those who were at first induced to join its ranks, until the American ingredient, backed by the mixture of a few 'almighty dollars,' became part of the prescription. So soon as this was known to be part and parcel of its principles, its vitality was more apparent. Still, Stephens knew that without a corresponding element, widely spread

in Ireland, he had little to hope for from America alone. An open invasion by an armed force from that country he knew was absurd ; but secret emissaries, with plenty of money at command, might, he thought, effect wonders in Ireland ; and open, but judicious emissaries in America from Ireland in return, with assurances of an universal welcome, an easy conquest, and a liberal distribution of lands and tenements, he knew would be equally effective there. To fulfil the performance of this programme, he sent Thomas Luby to America, where he had already left O'Mahony, and with whose assistance this mission proved successful, beyond even their own hopes. In fact, it may be said that it was Luby who at this period founded the Fenian conspiracy in America, upon something more than a mere ideality. Luby insinuated himself into the good opinion of General Corcoran, who was in command of the Irish Brigade, then a portion of the American army, and having successfully used his influence over the general himself, who was a regular Celt, he had his sanction to go amongst his soldiers, and, without let or hindrance, to address them upon the wrongs of Ireland. It was no wonder that a clever, eloquent, and unscrupulous man, such as Luby was, attained considerable success ; and having left matters with O'Mahony in a hopeful condition, he returned to Ireland to report progress to Stephens.

Stephens having thus far successfully paved the way for a firm footing, left for America himself. He had in the meantime established a newspaper in Dublin, called the *Irish People* ; and, added to his other ob-

jects in America, on the occasion of this visit, was that of procuring funds to enable him to circulate that paper gratuitously, as widely as possible. He had had some 'difference of opinion,' too, with O'Mahony, and he was aware of how great importance it was that it should be settled 'as quietly as possible.' Having succeeded in accomplishing both these objects, and expressed his approbation of how matters were progressing, he returned to Ireland.

We need scarcely follow Stephens step by step to the great climacteric to which we have been leading our readers. The probability is that they are as well acquainted with the progress of events as we are ourselves—*some* of them perhaps more so. They are all acquainted, however, with the crisis which arrived when the *Irish People* newspaper was seized in September 1865. The whole affair is of too recent notoriety to need any historical detail of the event. It is identified with everybody's life and remembrance. The result of the prosecutions at the special commission, issued soon after to try the conspirators, is also familiar to all.

The singular immunity which Stephens enjoyed for so many weeks, calmly reading of, some say actually looking on at the trials, and residing luxuriously 'within a stone's throw,' as the saying is, of 'King William a horseback,' was, upon the occasion of his arrest in November, the general topic of conversation. But it ceased to be wondered at, and made way for a still more exciting subject, on the morning when, after only a few days' imprisonment, his escape

from Richmond Bridewell rang from one end of the city to the other. Nay, some there be so bit by enthusiasm in his behalf, that 'they would take their oath upon a sack of Bibles' that his escape was all arranged prior to his arrest, and that he was his own informant, for the mere purpose of showing his power. This is absurd, for to make the thing at all chivalrous, he should have provided as well for the escape of Duffy, Kickham, and the others, who were arrested along with him. Supposing it for a moment, however, to be true, it would be the strongest possible proof of the *preorganisation* and *faith* of the conspiracy. Other stories there are connected with the arrest and escape of Stephens, which we do not believe, and which we are too staunch in our incredulity even to touch upon.

The special commission had done its work, and many of the conspirators were disposed of, for fifteen and twenty years' penal servitude. So far as they could ever hope to be again of use to the movement, it might as well have been for the term of their (un) natural lives.

Yet the American emissaries were not disheartened, they continued to arrive in ones, twos, and threes, vessel after vessel; and soon the streets of the cities of Dublin, Cork, and Limerick, were spotted over with them. Dépôts of arms, pikes, and ammunition, were almost daily discovered by the metropolitan police, and the vigilance of the constabulary in Cork and elsewhere was no less successful. It became necessary, under those circumstances, that the executive in

Ireland should be armed with extraordinary powers. The Habeas Corpus Act was, therefore, suspended shortly before the prorogation of parliament. This filled the jails with numbers of suspected persons, and it was hoped, and believed that the conspiracy had got a crush from which it was not likely again to spring into life. But the snake was scotched, not killed. The projected raid, however, upon Chester Castle, in February 1867, and the almost simultaneous but futile attempt at insurrection at Caherciveen, in the county of Kerry, brought matters to a focus with the conspirators in Ireland. There had been so much talk, and so little action, 'so much cry, and so little wool,' to use a familiar phrase, that a blow of some sort must be struck. Two or three of the dates upon which Stephens had pledged himself to be in the field at the head of a victorious army, had passed by, without so much as a squib being exploded, and there was little confidence that he would redeem his pledge. Some said, and perhaps thought, that he would doubtless start up—like Jack in the box, we suppose—at the first sound of the Fenian trumpet upon the hills, and many there were who had such a sort of belief in his supernatural powers as to believe it. But if not, something must be done without him. The exchequer in America was beginning to fail, through hope so often deferred, and if it were not to become bankrupt altogether, and the conspiracy permitted to collapse, some demonstration must be made, and the night of the 5th of March—Shrove Tuesday—was irrevocably settled upon for a general 'rising' to take place.



CHAPTER XX.

THE GENERAL RISING ON THE NIGHT OF THE 5TH OF MARCH
1867—CONDUCT OF THE CONSTABULARY ON THE OCCASION.

AT what precise time the authorities received any intimation that the edict had actually gone forth for the above night, we do not know ; and whether they had sufficient time to forewarn the provinces we cannot say, but we rather think they had not. On the morning of the 5th of March 1867, the troops in the city of Dublin, were under orders for active service at dusk that evening. The metropolitan police had also received their instructions. We ourselves are in a position to say, that until after twelve o'clock, noon, on that day, the 5th of March, the constabulary of the county of Dublin, knew nothing whatever of the intended insurrection, which, 'as sure as there was a heaven over us,'—such were the words of the information—would take place all over Ireland, on that night.

The county inspector of Dublin County, had the

advantage of personal instructions upon the subject from the Inspector-General, but it must be manifest that a person so preoccupied as the Inspector-General, who had at the time, we may say, the weight of all Ireland upon his mind, could do no more than shortly to call his officer's attention to the fact of the intended outbreak ; mention the principal points named in the information, as requiring most aid ; give him instructions to strengthen those points as far as possible, from such portions of the county as were least likely to be attacked, and to take personal charge of these arrangements. He could not venture to give specific instructions, in anticipation of events which might arise one way, or might arise another ; rendering the instructions which would be judicious in the one case, injudicious in the other, and which might possibly justify quite the reverse. The county inspector of Dublin, therefore, merely received instructions to strengthen certain points, and to proceed himself to, and remain at Rathfarnham. Further than this everything rested upon his own responsibility and judgment.

The promptness and energy with which these instructions were carried out may be learned from the fact, that before eight o'clock that evening there was not a station within the county which was not forewarned of the intended outbreak ; and arrangements had been made for the strengthening parties to arrive at Tallaght, Rathfarnham, and Clondalkin immediately after dark, so as not to attract notice. The county-inspector proceeded to Rathfarnham after dark,

where he sent scouts out on the roads in disguise, with orders to come in from time to time, and report what they had seen, and which would of course influence subsequent operations.

Up to ten o'clock Mr. Burke, the sub-inspector of the district, had been in charge of the party at Rathfarnham, which was his head station. About that hour one of the scouts arrived with word that numbers of men, some on foot, and some on cars, were directing their course towards Tallaght. The county-inspector judged at once that no time was to be lost in cutting off the great body of Fenians, who were evidently moving towards Tallaght Hill, the place where the 'general army' was to congregate at twelve o'clock that night. The Crumlin and Roundtown roads both struck into the village of Tallaght, immediately opposite the police barrack. No member above the rank of a head-constable, and he a very junior one, was there in command, and as a matter of course he would do no more than keep his barrack, and defend it; but it was ill calculated for defence, being but one storey, and after many lives must be lost on both sides, might ultimately fall. The party there consisted of only ten men of all ranks, while there were fourteen at Rathfarnham, which was better calculated for defence.

The county and sub-inspector 'held a council of war,' and it was arranged as speedily as possible that Mr. Burke should push forward at once, with a further reinforcement, to Tallaght, and use his own discretion as circumstances might arise, while the county-inspector would remain to defend Rathfarnham, if attacked.

Mr. Burke started at once, with two volunteers, sub-constables M'Cormick and Kenny, all well armed. He refused to take more, as he believed the Rathfarnham barrack would be attacked, and he did not wish to weaken that party too much. The county-inspector was not satisfied, although he pretended to be so, and sent, without Mr. Burke's knowledge, two more men immediately in his wake, who could be up to his aid in one minute, but who were not to show until they came to Tallaght, except in case of necessity.

It would be impossible to attach too much importance to this judicious movement on the part of the county-inspector, notwithstanding that it was in excess of his instructions. The cutting off of so main a body of the Fenians from joining their confederates on Tallaght Hill was the crowning result of that night's work of the constabulary of the county of Dublin. The Attorney-General, in his address to the jury on Patrick Doran's trial at the special commission, makes the thing plain. He remarks thus upon the subject :—

‘One rendezvous was in Palmerstown fields, at the back of Rathfarnham, and there one large body of Fenians were directed to mass themselves together, and when fully assembled to proceed by the Crumlin-road to Tallaght Hill, an open unfenced mountain, about two miles behind the village of Tallaght. Another large body were to proceed by another road through Tallaght to the same point. Here, when all had assembled in great force, the different bodies were to form themselves into one strong compact body of

many thousands, to whom arms, ammunition, and commanders were to be served out, and then the grand plan of an attack upon the city of Dublin was to be carried out.'

The above statement of the Attorney-General's is sufficient to show the vast importance of having cut off these two great augmenting bodies of Fenians before they could assemble 'in force,' to use a military phrase. And this object was fully attained by the prevision of the county-inspector of Dublin, executed in a prompt and masterly manner by Sub-inspector Burke. We cannot venture to be too diffuse upon this portion of our subject, although there can be, and universally there is, no doubt that it was the most important *preventive* result achieved by the constabulary throughout all Ireland upon that memorable night.

In justice to Mr. Burke and his party, we must give some of the particulars. Mr. Burke, with his two gallant volunteers from Rathfarnham, on arriving within a short distance of Tallaght, fell in with a party of Fenians, in charge of a cart loaded with ammunition. The night was so dark that it could not be computed how many, but regardless of the number, Mr. Burke and his two men rushed forward to capture it. The man who seized the bridle was at once struck at by the leader of the Fenians, who was armed with a sword; an encounter took place, in which the insurgent was wounded by a rifle-sword thrust, of which he subsequently died. Upon his falling the Fenian escort fled in all directions, leaving the ammunition cart in the hands of the police. It may be that the darkness

of the night proved on this occasion as good as a dozen men to Mr. Burke and his two volunteers, as 'the enemy' could not tell that there were not thirty, instead of three. We by no means intend by this to disparage the bravery of the men in question. They at all events knew that they were but three, while the escort, dark as the night was, could fairly be computed at from twenty to thirty. They then brought the cart to the police barrack at Tallaght. The ammunition, which was in a large barrel and bags, was deposited in the day room, and the horse and cart turned into the yard. This had been scarcely accomplished when the word ran through the men that an immense body of Fenians were coming up the Crumlin-road, right in front of the barrack. 'They must not pass, boys—fall in,' was Mr. Burke's prompt and spirited order. His party consisted now of fourteen men of all ranks, the two whom the county-inspector had sent in his wake having come up. He drew this small but resolute party across the road, and waited the approach of the insurgents at 'full cock.' When they had arrived within about forty yards of him, he stepped out in front, told them he had a large armed party ready to receive them, and called upon them in the name of the Queen either to surrender or disperse. Of two evils they chose the least, and came to the right about, and returned down the road. When some distance off they fired two or three shots, which Mr. Burke does not think were at the police, but in bravado.

Soon after the heavy tramp of another large body was heard approaching by the Roundtown road.

Mr. Burke and his party again stood ready on the defensive. As before, as soon as they had come within forty or fifty yards of him, Mr. Burke challenged them, in the same manner he had done with the other party, but with a different result. The instant command from their leader was, 'now's your time, boys—fire.' At the same moment a volley of about thirty shots was fired at the police, fortunately and miraculously without any injury, probably from their having dropped on their knees at the word, 'ready.' Mr. Burke then—and not until then—gave orders to his men to fire, which they did with better effect, for one or two of the insurgents were killed, and several wounded. The result of this volley was the instant flight of the Fenians, who dispersed in all directions, many of them throwing down their rifles and ammunition to lighten their flight.

Thus were these two large bodies of the insurgents cut off from forming what was to be the grand assembly upon Tallaght Hill, where they were to be served out with commanders; and this movement it was which put a complete extinguisher upon the insurrection, so far as the county of Dublin was concerned.

Mr. Burke and his party picked up seventeen rifles, and many thousand rounds of ammunition and percussion caps upon the scene of this short, but conclusive conflict, as soon as daylight appeared; and they had made upwards of fifty prisoners of dispersed Fenians before morning.

While Mr. Burke and his gallant men were thus engaged at Tallaght, the county-inspector's party at

Rathfarnham, although they did not come in contact with any compact body of armed Fenians, were not idle. They patrolled the roads in the neighbourhood, and arrested nineteen prisoners, some of them wearing military belts, and armed with clasp knives, having dagger blades. Some of these prisoners were convicted at the special commission of treason-felony, and sentenced accordingly.

In contradistinction, however, to the great achievement at Tallaght, we are bound, as truthful historians, to record one or two reverses which the constabulary sustained within the county.

The constabulary party at Stepside, consisting of a constable in command and four men, were attacked about one o'clock on that night, by a numerous body of armed Fenians, who surrounded the barrack, and demanded a surrender to 'The Irish Republic.' At first the constable refused to surrender, and a few shots—we fear too few—were fired upon the assailants, when, upon the production of Greek fire, straw, and lucifer matches, accompanied with a threat to 'burn them out,' the barrack was thrown open to the insurgents, and the arms, ammunition, and all their other belongings, surrendered.

Four of the metropolitan police had been surprised by this body of Fenians, at Miltown, where they were on duty, and where, being unarmed, except with batons, they were made easy prisoners of. The Stepside men were now added to these, and the whole nine were carried away under a special guard of armed Fenians.

This body, which we may call 'the 2nd light infantry,' then proceeded to another constabulary barrack, called Glencullen, about four miles further on, up the mountain. Here, having arrived and surrounded the barrack, the leader went forward and called upon the constable (O'Brien) to surrender to 'The Irish Republic.' He promptly and resolutely refused; and, having been forewarned, he was on the alert with his four determined men. The Fenians at once opened a rolling fire upon the barrack, which was instantly returned by the police, wounding some of the assailants, who then got behind the shelter of a wall about four feet high, immediately in front of the barrack, and only the breadth of the road distant. From this they kept up a brisk fusillade for some time from their riflemen; but the police were still better protected, and returned the fire upon every possible opportunity of its being effective, the constable declaring aloud, that he would surrender to no man. It was now clear daylight, and there appeared no hope that the constable would yield, or that they could carry the barrack by storm. But the devil, who is the author of all evil strategy, here suggested to the leader of the Fenians, that the prisoners who were already in his power could be made to work out their purpose. The savage order was, therefore, given for them to be brought forward, and placing them in front, between the two fires, he again called on Constable O'Brien to surrender, declaring that if he did not do so, his comrades had not five minutes to live. Up to this moment Constable O'Brien was in

total ignorance of the fact, that his comrades from Stepside and four metropolitan police were prisoners in the hands of the insurgents; but at the sight of these nine men, all comrades, he might say, being thus posted up for instant death, the brave man's resolution—but not his courage—quailed before the fact. Constable M'Ilwain, the Stepside prisoner, and the friend of O'Brien, was then ordered forward to parley with him for their lives, and the leader of the insurgents accompanied him to the door. M'Ilwain did parley with O'Brien, in the terms of a man doomed to death by his reply. He told O'Brien, which was nothing more than the truth—'that he and his comrades, with four of the metropolitan police, had but five minutes to live if he did not surrender; that there were a thousand Fenians, most of them well armed, around the barrack; that they were collecting straw and other combustibles to burn them alive, and that he ought rather save the nine lives which he had in his hands, by surrendering, than sacrifice themselves and them.'

Reader, O'Brien yielded!—But even in yielding he made favourable terms for his own party and the prisoners. They were these: that no injury was to be done on either side to life or limb; that the nine prisoners were to be handed over to him, and that he would deliver up the arms, ammunition, bedding, &c., of the party. These terms were agreed to by the Fenian leader, with the further stipulation, that they should not one of them stir out of the barrack for two hours after they (the Fenians) had left. This was

solemnly promised — ‘words of honour’ were exchanged, that there should be no treachery on either side, and the barrack door was thrown open. The terms of surrender were carried out on both sides, with the additional precaution, however, on the part of the Fenian leader, that a guard of fifty riflemen was left to see that the two hours’ confinement to the barrack was faithfully observed—a very sure method by-the-by, to ensure confidence in the promise of the constable.

Now we acknowledge that the hasty surrender of the Stepside barrack, was altogether unjustifiable, taken in any light in which the occurrence can be viewed, up to the moment of surrender. We are also aware that the conduct of Constable O’Brien, at Glencullen, even under the trying circumstances in which he was placed, if taken in a strictly military point of view, would receive no further consideration than the other ; but we confess we are neither surprised nor sorry, that Constable O’Brien preferred, that five of her Majesty’s rifles should be lost, than nearly double that number of the lives of her Majesty’s subjects.





CHAPTER XXI.

DESCRIPTIVE PARTICULARS.

WE have dwelt sufficiently long upon the county of Dublin, but have not, however, improvised a single incident; all the matters which we have recorded have been for some time official facts. There are other parts of Ireland to which we shall now refer in continuation of 'the rising,' on the memorable night of the 5th of March. We will take the circumstances as much as possible in the order of what appears to us to be their importance.

On the same night (and let it be understood that in all the cases which we shall have to describe, the night of the 5th of March is the one referred to), a large body of Fenians assembled in the market square of Drogheda, between ten and eleven o'clock. It was very dark, but it was pretty fairly ascertained that there could not be less than one thousand Fenians collected on the occasion. Most of them were armed with weapons of one kind or other. Sub-inspector

Gardiner, upon learning this fact, at once turned out his party of constabulary, numbering not quite twenty men, and marched to meet them in open conflict. The moment they approached within range they were fired upon by some of the insurgents, and the constabulary instantly returned the fire. Notwithstanding the darkness of the night, their volley must have done some execution, for the insurgents were heard retreating in all directions. The police reloaded, and continued to fire at the retreating Fenians, who were soon totally routed, with the exception of some who were made prisoners, and two or three wounded men. Many others must have been wounded or shot, and carried away by their 'comrades in arms.' A great many rifles, and a large quantity of ammunition, together with a number of bottles of Greek fire, were secured by the police. One of the wounded men survived but a few days. In the morning the police picked up a still greater quantity of ammunition, and a vast number of percussion caps, with which the market square was strewn.

The dispersion of this large body of Fenians by Mr. Gardiner was second in importance only to that of the two 'brigades' by Mr. Burke at Tallaght.

At a very early hour, towards the morning of the 6th, a large body of armed Fenians surrounded the constabulary barrack at Kilmallock, in the county of Limerick. They demanded its surrender, which was resolutely refused. The garrison consisted of fourteen men, under the command of Head-constable Richard Adams; while the insurgents could not have num-

bered less than from one thousand to one thousand five hundred, under the ostensible command, but not the control, of a person called 'General Dunne.' This man was dressed in a green uniform, and wore a cocked hat and feathers. The insurgents attempted at first to set fire to the barrack; but they were fired upon too briskly to be able to accomplish their design. They then poured volley after volley from their rifles into the windows, and through the doors, which were continuously, and with more effect, returned by the gallant little garrison within.

Mr. Milling, sub-inspector of the district, who resided at Kilfinane, about six miles from Kilmallock, not knowing the actual circumstances of the insurrection in that locality, but judging, to a certain extent, that his presence might be more desirable there than at Kilfinane, started on a car with three policemen for that place. About midway, however, the car was stopped by a crowd upon the road. They were not armed, or if they were, they did not show their weapons; but they formed a compact body, and would not let the car pass. Mr. Milling and his men distinctly heard the firing going on at Kilmallock, during this interruption to his progress, and judging how matters stood, he drove back rapidly to Kilfinane, where he had twenty men, from whom he selected eight, besides the three he had originally with him. Taking two other cars he drove again towards Kilmallock with the utmost speed. They got off the cars at the entrance of the town, and 'prepared for action,' the firing at the barrack continuing all

the time. When they arrived within about two hundred yards of the police barrack, they perceived about thirty men, armed with pikes, at the gable end of the barrack, so placed as to be secure from any shots from the police inside. The firing was still going on from parties of insurgents in front and rear of the barrack. Mr. Milling, without any parley, ordered his men to fire upon the assailants. Two or three of the rebels fell, the others threw down their rifles and pikes and ran in all directions, upon being thus taken unexpectedly in flank. Mr. Milling and his party then went up to the barrack, outside of which they found two men dead, and a number of pikes, rifles, and swords, scattered on the ground. Mr. Milling and his men cheered lustily as they came up to the barrack, which encouraging cry was still more lustily responded to by the besieged. The Kilmallock party were thus saved, by Mr. Milling's promptitude in arriving with relief, and in the undaunted bravery of himself and his men. The firing still continued at intervals from the corners of the adjoining streets, one party of the insurgents having fled towards the town, while the pikemen took to the fields. The latter part of this conflict took place in broad daylight, Mr. Milling not having arrived to the rescue until after eight o'clock in the morning, at which time the brave little garrison had gallantly stood upwards of four hours' siege. Mr. Milling subsequently marched his party, augmented by some of the men from the barrack, through the town, which put an effectual stop to the firing from the corners of the

streets, for in a short space of time there was not a Fenian to be seen. It is to be regretted that 'General' Dunne was not captured or shot on this occasion; but the constabulary acted nobly all through.

After midnight on the same night, and in the same county, a large body of well-armed Fenians surrounded the constabulary barrack at Ardagh. They called upon the police, consisting of only a constable and four men, to surrender to 'the Irish republic.' This was peremptorily refused by Constable George Forsythe, who was in command. The insurgents then commenced to pour a volley from their rifles through the doors and windows. The kitchen door in the rear was forced open, and the assailants gained admittance. These five policemen, notwithstanding, continued to defend their barrack with the greatest determination, against immense odds, and ultimately succeeded in beating back the insurgents, several of whom they wounded—if none were killed. Seeing the hopelessness of the attack, the Fenians finally retreated, leaving several pikes behind them, but no rifles. This appears to be if possible a still more gallant defence than even Kilmallock, as the insurgents had at one time actually gained admittance within the barrack, and the garrison numbered only five men!

On the same night, and about the same hour (we are not answerable for the *sameness* of our story), a large body of armed insurgents attacked the constabulary barrack at Ballyknockane, in the county of Cork. As usual, they called upon the police to sur-

render to 'the Irish republic.' This barrack was occupied by Constable Brown and four men, who, as in other cases, resolutely refused, the men coming to full cock, and placing themselves ready for action, under cover of the recesses at the sides of the windows. Immediately—or sooner, if possible—a brisk fire was opened upon the barrack by the assailants, which, as a matter of course, was returned by the constabulary. The rear of the place admitted of no defence, and the back door was soon smashed in, when the insurgents dragged in a quantity of straw and set fire to the barrack, calling to the police upstairs to know 'if they would now surrender?' The reply to this was a brace of shots through the dense smoke which was filling the upper rooms. The insurgents, not relishing the idea of being caught in their own trap, did not ascend the stairs, but set up a hideous laugh of satisfaction. Hear Constable Brown's own words at this juncture; they are extracted from his evidence at the special commission:—'One of my family, a daughter, was with me inside; she was nearly insensible from terror and the smoke. I asked them to allow her to go out; they refused, except I gave up our arms. I told them I would not. After some time, the danger still increasing, I asked them again, and they let her out. The smoke soon after became quite suffocating, and the flames began to burst through it; the lower part of the barrack was impassible. Some of the insurgents then procured a ladder, and placed it to one of the upper windows, calling on us to come down and give up our arms, if we did not wish to be roasted

alive. There was an armed body of Fenians at the foot of the ladder, about one hundred and fifty. We had no alternative but to descend, or to perish in the flames. While we were descending two shots were fired, but whether at us or not I cannot tell. As each man descended his arms were forcibly taken from him. One of the insurgents said, "This is the day of the general rising; Cork has not been attacked yet, but it will be taken before a week." Our arms, ammunition, and accoutrements having been taken from us, we were permitted to depart.'

Soon after midnight on the same night—we wish we could vary this stereotyped expression, but we can't—a numerous body of insurgents surrounded the constabulary barrack at Castlemartyr, also in the county of Cork. The preliminaries, which the reader must have now learned by heart, having been gone through, they fired several volleys through the doors and windows, but without injuring any of the men, who were ready for them, and stood to their corners. The party consisted of only seven men, including Constable O'Connell, who was in command. The police, who determinedly refused to surrender, fired upon their assailants with good effect. One man was shot dead with the first volley, and several wounded. This barrack was not so easily got at as others, as it was difficult to force an entrance, without great exposure to the fire of the police. The Fenians, thus finding that they were at a great disadvantage at the long range, and that the constabulary were ready for them at all points, beat a hasty retreat.

The insurgents had in the first instance set fire to a rick of straw in the immediate vicinity, hoping, no doubt, that the police would leave their barrack to extinguish it; but they appear to have been 'up to the dodge,' and did not move. When daylight came, a large quantity of ball cartridge and percussion caps was found scattered about before the barrack. Several parties of insurgents had been traversing the neighbourhood of Castlemartyr on that night, one of which disarmed the coastguard.

About midnight on the same night—there it is again—a body of Fenians attacked the constabulary barrack at Emly, in the county of Tipperary. The usual demand was made for the police to surrender to 'the Irish republic,' and the same want of success attended the demand. The order was then given by the leader, 'Riflemen to the front,' and a determined attack was commenced, when a volley of bullets shattered the doors and windows, but Constable Patrick Derwan and his gallant little garrison refused all compromise. A threat was then held out that the barrack 'would be burned over their heads,' but it had not the desired effect, and was only replied to by a brisk return of rifle bullets. The assailants found it inconvenient to set fire to the barrack, without exposing themselves to these 'leaden messengers,' and after a fruitless attack of upwards of an hour they retreated. It did not appear, from subsequent inspection of the premises by daylight, that any of the insurgents were killed or wounded, but doubtless some must have been.

About midnight on the same night, '*ecce iterum Crispinus!*' a very large body of armed insurgents attacked the constabulary barrack at Gurtavoher, also in the county of Tipperary, and the preliminary demand to surrender to the Irish republic having been, as in all other cases, made and declined, the attack from 'the riflemen' at once commenced; the fire was returned, at first by a volley, and then judiciously, as opportunity offered with any prospect of effect. The doors and windows were literally smashed with bullets from without and within. The little garrison in this case consisted of Constable Martin Scurry and four men. They continued to defend their barrack with such determination and effect, several of the insurgents having been wounded, that they ultimately retreated, leaving several pikes, but no rifles behind them.

About eleven o'clock on the same night—(we have no expression to vary the commencement of our paragraph this time; but the reader will not be sorry to learn that it is about the last time he will hear of 'that same night')—upon the same night—our parenthesis is so long that we must repeat the words—a number of Fenians, *en route* to join their 'brethren in arms' at Palmerstown fields, in the county of Dublin, already adverted to, halted at the constabulary barrack in the village of Palmerstown. One of the party went forward to the door, and knocked for admittance, with a cock and a *bull* story about a *cow*. The police party from this barrack had been concentrated at Clon-dalkin, where a serious demonstration had been apprehended, and there was only one solitary policeman

within. He, through the door, asked 'who was there?' when the man replied that he had a letter from Mr. —, a neighbouring magistrate. 'Hand it in,' said the policeman, 'and it shall be attended to;' and he opened the door so far as the strong hall chain which was attached would permit. Instantly the man thrust his shoulder and knee into the opening, and called out, 'Come on, boys, come on.' By this time the eyes of the policeman were opened to the nature of his visitants; but he was not overwhelmed with terror or affright. The strong chain was, he found, a great assistance to him, and with much self-possession, and before 'the boys' could 'come up,' he had succeeded in closing the door again, and locking it, not, however, before a bullet from a revolver had grazed his temples, and lodged in the wall a few inches above his head. They then demanded a surrender in the usual terms, of which we have no doubt our readers are as tired as we are ourselves; but this single policeman—John Blair, be it known, was his name—resolutely refused. The insurgents then, we suppose from fear of being behind time at the rendezvous in 'the fields,' proceeded in that direction, firing several shots as they left. It is not supposed that they were aware the police *party* at Palmerstown consisted of only a single individual.

The above are the principal and most important occasions upon which the constabulary distinguished themselves upon the night of 'the rising.' There were many others of minor consideration, with which we need not trouble our readers.



CHAPTER XXII.

INSTANCES OF INDIVIDUAL BRAVERY—CONSTABLE WILLIAM DUGGAN.

WE must not forget, however, to record the names of some members of the force who performed acts of individual bravery. And here, to meet the case of the first man who distinguished himself, we must, as briefly as possible, advert to the attempt at outbreak which occurred near Cahirciveen, in the county of Kerry, on the night of the 12th of February 1867, and which might be called the pilot balloon of the insurrection.

In the spring of 1865 a very respectable young man arrived at Caherciveen, and took lodgings, ostensibly for the good of his health. He was a perfect stranger, but ingratiated himself into the good opinion of all with whom he came in contact, from the kindness and affability of his manner. But there was a certain military air and bearing about him which he could not at all times shake off, and which attracted the

attention of the constabulary, who kept their eye upon him. At the same time they made judicious and secret inquiries as to his 'antecedents.' They were successful in ascertaining that his name was James O'Connor; indeed he had not assumed an '*alias*,' for there were old men in the district who had known his parents, who had emigrated from Valentia when he was an infant. He had spent the whole of the intermediate time in America, whence he had just returned, as he said, 'to recruit his health and strength.' As his health and strength appeared to the constabulary to be both very effective, they doubted if they were the only objects of his recruiting, and they watched his movements accordingly. It was not necessary either, they thought, for his health's sake, that he should spend money so generously and so freely amongst the people as he was found to do. The constabulary had now no doubt that he was a Fenian organizer, and search was made at his lodgings for 'documents and revolvers.' Nothing, however, was discovered; he appeared to be very indignant, and stood his ground. As soon, however, as the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended he was *non est inventus*.

Nothing more was heard of him until the night of the 12th of February 1867, when it was ascertained that he was in command of a large body of armed insurgents, who contemplated an attack upon the constabulary barrack at Caherciveen.

The constabulary having had some short notice of the attack, were, so far as their numbers permitted, prepared. Captain White of the Coastguard Station,

went himself to her Majesty's ship 'Gladiator,' which was then at Valentia, and procured some marines, who, with his own men, were determined to assist the constabulary. The Fenians getting some intimation of these preparations, abandoned their intention of an attack on the police barrack, and marched in another direction. During the night they came upon a coast-guard station at Kells, where only one man happened to be at the time, the chief boatman and three others being absent on 'wreck-duty.' They suddenly and easily overpowered this single man, and robbed the station of arms, swords, and ammunition. They then visited several private houses in the neighbourhood, robbing them of arms and provisions, and terrifying women and children everywhere in their progress. At a place called Nimmo's-bridge, at a short turn of the road, mounted Sub-constable William Duggan met them face to face. Duggan belonged to Killorglin station, and had been sent to Caherciveen with an important despatch, announcing the intended attack upon the barrack. The information upon this subject had been ascertained from a letter which was found in the pocket of a Fenian captain, whom O'Connor had sent on the mail car to Caherciveen; but who had been arrested *in transitu*. The letter was directed to D. L. Sheehan, Esq., H.C., a draper's assistant, and 'head centre' of the district. The party of Fenians whom Duggan now met face to face, was considerably over one hundred, armed with guns and pikes. They called upon him to 'surrender to the Irish Republic.' He drew his sword, and putting spurs to his horse,

gallantly attempted to cut his way through. The cowardly ruffians did not venture to stand before him, or stop his progress in front, numerous as they were ; but, levelling their guns, they fired at him just as he had made his way through, and almost fatally, for he fell—but not until he had ridden on some little distance from his murderous assailants ; when, weak from loss of blood, he half fell, and half dismounted from his horse. It was now about four o'clock in the morning, and in the dim light he perceived a house at some short distance below the wood that skirted the road. He managed to get over the fence towards this house, and as he struggled down the Fenians fired two shots at him as he entered it. To the honour of the owner, a man named Moriarty, be it recorded, that he admitted the wounded man. But he was not done with his pursuers. Some of the Fenians followed him into the house, and their leader, O'Connor, was one. He examined the wound, and said it would not signify, and that he had himself received more serious ones in the American war. O'Connor then took out a flask, and gave the wounded man a draught of brandy ; at the same time he searched for and found the despatch, which Duggan had concealed beneath his shirt. Having secured the despatch, O'Connor and his comrades in iniquity left the house. When O'Connor was leaving, poor Duggan requested him to send him a priest, which he promised to do, 'and a doctor,' he added, as he went towards the door. 'You need not mind the doctor,' faintly sighed poor Duggan ; 'you have doctored me yourself.'

In the mean time, Moriarty and his wife administered in the kindest, and most anxious manner to Duggan—nothing could exceed their attention to him. The next morning, or rather on that same morning, the priest, the Rev. Father Maguire, arrived about half-past eleven o'clock. He met the full body of insurgents near Glanleigh, where there was a police station. He warned them to disperse ; told them he had put the police on their guard, and did all in his power to dissuade them from their wicked designs. Dr. Spottiswood arrived at Moriarty's soon after the priest ; and administered what relief he could, but had no hopes of poor Duggan's recovery. He extracted the ball, which had passed almost quite through his body, and he had him removed to a more comfortable place, near the police barrack at Glanleigh. The government sent a medical man specially from Dublin to assist Dr. Spottiswood ; but after three days' constant attendance, he returned with the doleful news that he had no hopes whatever that Duggan's life could be preserved ; that he could do nothing more for him, and had left him in as able hands as if he had remained. Duggan, however, continued to linger for days and weeks upon the very verge of the grave—we might now indeed write 'months'—for with skill and the Lord's mercy he still lives. He may now be said to be out of imminent or immediate danger ; but his ultimate recovery, should it ever permanently take place, can only be to the shattered and painful resemblance of the fine, stalwart, young man he was, as he gallantly mounted his horse on this

perilous duty on the night of the 12th of February 1867.

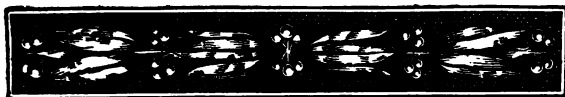
It would be very remiss in us if we did not here record the *esprit de corps*, as well as the real affection, exhibited to him by the constabulary of the county to which Constable Duggan belonged. In return for the prompt protection offered to their wounded comrade, and the subsequent attention and kindness bestowed upon him by the Moriartys, the county force made up a purse of £29 which they presented to Mrs. Moriarty, in token of their gratitude; her services were also recognised by the public, and the government sent her £10.

One more instance, and we shall turn to brighter and more agreeable subjects :—

On the morning of the 9th of March, Sub-constable Hugh Kerr was sent in plain clothes from Maryboro' with a despatch for Portarlinton, giving warning of an intended attack by the Fenians, who meant to take arms in that district. He arrived safe in Mountmellick, where matters were just then in a very dubious state. Sub-inspector Mr. Myles Blake Burke had found it necessary to be on the alert with his men, and did valuable service. On the morning of the 6th, he was out at an early hour, and from private information he found a number of well-sharpened pikes, and a quantity of ammunition, both for rifles and revolvers. On that night, too, he did not rest from his labours, as with his men on patrol, he fell in with and dispersed a body of Fenians, arresting several, two of whom were armed with loaded re-

volvers, and these men were convicted of Whiteboyism at the subsequent assizes. We must not allow ourselves to wander too far back into these matters, or we shall never have done. It was of Sub-constable Kerr we were about to speak.

Whilst Kerr was in the barrack at Mountmellick, on the 9th of March, a man named Dillon, armed with a revolver, fired into it. Kerr rushed out at once, by the back door, came round behind Dillon, and seized him round the body, and with the assistance of the police brought him into the barrack. He soon after started back for Maryboro', freighted with 'further particulars,' to the county-inspector. Before he reached his destination, he met two men, seemingly in a great hurry, whom he stopped and questioned closely, as to their business. Their account being very unsatisfactory, he pulled out a pistol with which he was armed, and made prisoners of both, telling them that he was a policeman, and declaring he would shoot them, if they attempted to escape. With this threat constantly upon his lips, he succeeded in bringing them to Maryboro', where, upon examination, documents were found which clearly connected them with the Fenian movement; and as they were both from Dublin, it is more than probable that they had been at the 'battle of Tallaght.'



CHAPTER XXIII.

RECOGNITION OF THE SERVICES OF THE CONSTABULARY BY BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT AND THE PUBLIC.

THE Irish constabulary having thus planted groves of laurel round their respective barracks, reposed during the spring and summer months, under their wide-spread foliage ; as it is said of a boat's crew, 'resting on their oars'—so, too, it may be said of the Irish constabulary, that they were 'resting on their renown.'

The head of the department did not, however, rest ; the Chief Secretary did not rest ; the Lord Lieutenant did not rest. Constant communications took place between the Inspector-General and the government, upon the all-pervading subject of 'the Irish Constabulary,' and the important services they had rendered to their Queen and country. So early as the 14th of March, the Chief Secretary wrote to the Inspector-General, by command of the Lord Lieutenant, expressing His Excellency's high sense of

the gallantry and fidelity displayed by the constabulary, and wishing that the Inspector-General would consider the most appropriate mode in which he would recommend that rewards should be bestowed upon those members who had particularly distinguished themselves, and that His Excellency was anxious that they should be of a substantial nature, and given in a manner which would be most gratifying to the feelings of the force.

To this the Inspector-General replied, expressing 'the great gratification he felt, at the sense which the government entertained of the gallantry and fidelity which had been displayed. The terms of the Chief Secretary's letter rendered it unnecessary for him to enlarge upon the merits of the constabulary, the more so, as they were so highly appreciated by the public at large.' He then came to the point at once, and recommended that a sum of £2000 should be voted by the Houses of Parliament, and placed in his hands, for distribution amongst those who had signalised themselves in conflict with the Fenians; and that her Majesty should be moved to recognise their services, by graciously directing a letter to be written, conveying her thanks, and commanding that the designation of the force should hereafter be 'the Royal' or 'the Queen's Constabulary.'

The letter of the Chief Secretary, together with the above reply from the Inspector-General, were then transmitted, by direction of the Lord Lieutenant, to the Secretary of the Treasury. In transmitting them the Chief Secretary recapitulated His Excellency's

anxiety 'to take the earliest opportunity of marking, in a substantial manner, the high sense he entertained of the gallantry, fidelity, and courage, &c., which had been so signally displayed by the Irish constabulary.' The Chief Secretary went on to say, 'the well-known and often tried qualities of this splendid force, have never been exhibited in brighter colours than within the last few days.

'Eleven thousand men, placed by small detachments in one thousand six hundred stations, have, for years, discharged with success, many and varied duties of an important character. Their conduct has been excellent; the highest state of discipline has been invariably maintained, and while many efforts have been made to corrupt their fidelity, they have never wavered in their allegiance, and not even a suspicion of disloyalty has ever attached itself to the body. The sudden appearance of bodies of armed men connected with the Fenian conspiracy, in various parts of the country on the night of the 5th, and morning of the 6th of March, severely tested their courage and faithfulness. The constabulary stations appear to have been specially marked out as the first object of attack, and in fact, the offensive operations of the insurgents were almost wholly directed against them.' The Chief Secretary then enumerates some of the most prominent cases of attack and defence which occurred on the night in question, but as we have ourselves included them in our own descriptions, we need not repeat them here.

The Chief Secretary closed his letter expressing

the earnest desire of the Lord Lieutenant, that a vote of £2000, as suggested by the Inspector-General, should be placed upon the estimates.

To this there was a reply, within a week, stating how fully the Lords Commissioners of her Majesty's Treasury concurred with his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, in the sentiments he had expressed with regard to the conduct of the constabulary force of Ireland; and that they would readily direct that a vote of £2000 should be submitted specially to the House of Commons, to be distributed by the Inspector-General in recognition of particular services.

In the latter end of March, the vote was passed without a dissentient voice. The fame of the constabulary was gaining strength, like a snowball as it rolled along, and had now become what they call 'a patent fact.' The members of both Houses of Parliament spoke in terms the most unqualified in their praise. The words 'Irish constabulary' rang from one end of 'Lords and Commons' to the other. Their eulogies were printed in all the newspapers of the day, and they must be familiar to all who read the debates upon the subject, with the interest which they deserved. A few extracts, however, from the speeches in both Houses, have a legitimate claim to a place in these pages, and may be acceptable to those who have not read them or, having done so, may perhaps have forgotten them.

Lord Lifford, in moving for certain returns, said in the course of his address :—

'During the late insurrection, the Irish constabulary

had exhibited such unbending loyalty, as had crowned them with honour, and which could not be surpassed. The men were stationed at outposts, scattered here and there, few in numbers, often without command of any kind, and how did they behave? Why, the blow they struck, which was for the United Kingdom as well as for Ireland itself, they struck in such a manner, as to cover themselves with glory, and to do honour to the country they protected !'

Lord Derby in replying observed—'This body of police are sprung from that class of the people, amongst whom, if amongst any, there are likely to be found the seeds of discontent ; and yet, in no case was there the slightest disloyalty amongst them ; and their determined and successful efforts to suppress this insurrection have been nothing short of actual heroism.'

The Earl of Cork 'bore testimony to the great courage shown by the Irish constabulary, whenever they had been brought into contact with the misguided men who had vainly endeavoured to destroy the British Government. Where all had behaved so well, it was difficult to make any distinction ; but he could not help referring to the gallant stand made at a place not far from his property by fourteen policemen, who had bravely resisted some 300 insurgents for more than three hours. He had heard with great pleasure that it was the intention of the government to reward those who had behaved so well.'

The Duke of Cambridge said—'I am glad of this occasion to bear my testimony to the admirable con-

duct of the Irish constabulary. I have had opportunities of seeing the reports from various detachments of troops employed in the disturbed districts, and on every occasion the conduct of the Irish constabulary was marked with the greatest possible loyalty and bravery.'

The Earl of Kimberley said—'I should be sorry to let this opportunity pass without adding my testimony to the admirable manner in which the Irish constabulary behaved during the late unfortunate outbreak. Having had full opportunity of observing the conduct of the constabulary during the time when I was Lord Lieutenant, I can say most positively that in no instance was there the smallest sympathy with disaffection amongst them. The behaviour of the Irish constabulary upon the recent occasion is such, as the noble Earl opposite has said, that it is entirely beyond my words to express the honour due to them, and there is no reasonable request of theirs which should not be granted.' (Hear, hear.)

In the House of Commons, Mr. Monsell, in the course of an address upon the still prevailing subject, remarked—'He wished to call the attention of the house to the courage and self-reliance exhibited, he believed, in every place in Ireland where the constabulary came into collision with the insurgents during the late unhappy attempt at rebellion.'

Mr. C. Fortescue 'heartily concurred in all that had been said as to the gallant and patriotic conduct of the Irish constabulary, and expressed his feeling, that the most consolatory circumstance which had occurred

during those unhappy events was the admirable and faithful conduct of that force. It was, however, only what his experience had led him to expect from them, for his acquaintance with the force last year had led him to the conclusion, that if their services should be required, they would not be found wanting, and he had not been mistaken.'

Mr. Herbert said—'He could not forbear calling attention to one case which, in his opinion, was deserving of special notice, as it was the first case of the kind which had occurred.' The hon. member then referred to the case of Sub-constable William Duggan, which we have already detailed to our readers. He added—'No compensation in money could reward that man (hear, hear), and if the Victoria Cross was not to be confined to the army, he could conceive no more fitting reward for those men.'

Mr. Bagwell said—'The bravery of the Irish constabulary was the theme of admiration over the whole country. There could be no doubt that this unfortunate insurrection had been put down entirely by them.'

Lord Naas, Chief Secretary for Ireland, said—'I entirely agree with my honourable friend as to the impossibility of overrating the services rendered by the Irish constabulary during the recent outbreak. Every attack upon a police barrack had resulted in such utter failure, that the attempt appeared ridiculous. But it should be recollected that at the time these attacks were made the constabulary were ignorant as to the actual state of affairs. In almost every

instance, when called upon to surrender and give up their arms, they were informed that the whole country was up in arms, that the 'Irish Republic' had been established, and that resistance would be useless. It therefore appeared to him that the country was placed under a lasting debt of gratitude to the Irish constabulary, who had defeated the conspirators wherever they had been brought in contact with them, and who had proved to the country and to the world the utter futility of the movement.'

We might multiply such expressions of praise and approbation almost *ad infinitum* upon the subject ; but we think that, in the above extracts, we have given enough to justify our expression, that the praises of the Irish constabulary 'rang from one end of both Houses of Parliament to the other.'





CHAPTER XXIV.

DECORATION OF THE FORCE BY THE MARCHIONESS OF ABERCORN, AND DISTRIBUTION OF MEDALS AT THE DEPÔT, PHENIX PARK, ON THE 6TH OF SEPTEMBER 1867.

THE fame of the Irish constabulary had thus blossomed like a peach-tree, early in the spring; as the summer advanced the fruit 'had set,' and was ripening in the sun, and ere long was to be plucked by the force generally, but more particularly by the individuals who had borne part in the before-mentioned gallant acts.

But it was to be no mere bestowal of favours, as was the distribution of the £2000, upon printed forms. On the contrary, there was to be a public ceremony, not only honoured by the presence of the Lord Lieutenant, but graced and co-operated in by that of the Marchioness (now Duchess) of Abercorn, who was to honour the recipients by attaching, with her own hands, the beautiful medals which were struck to commemorate their renown.

On Friday, the 6th of September 1867, this novel and interesting ceremony took place at the Constabulary Dépôt, in the Phoenix Park.

The ceremony was fixed to take place at three o'clock, and immediately previous to that hour the assembled force at the dépôt were drawn up on the parade ground in hollow square, the southern face being open towards the grand approach. Colonel Hillier, Deputy Inspector-General, took the command, in the absence of the Inspector-General, who was on leave. In the centre of the square stood, side by side, the officers and the men who were to receive the special recognition of their valour. The magnificent band of the force, under the direction of their talented conductor, Harry Hardy, fell in a little to the left front, and it was never in greater strength—not a piccolo was absent.

Soon after three o'clock the Chief Secretary's carriage drove into the yard, by the lower gate, and his lordship, who was accompanied by Lords Frederick and Ernest Hamilton, alighted, and walked past the assembled force with Colonel Hillier. Soon the trampling of many hoofs was heard, '*Quadrupedante putrem sonitu, qualis ungula compum,*' and his Excellency's carriage and four, preceded by outriders, drove in at the principal entrance, and a crash of the National Anthem burst from Harry Hardy's well-trained men. The carriage having drawn up in front of the open side of the square, his Excellency and the Marchioness of Abercorn alighted, and were received by the Chief Secretary and Colonel Hillier. They were accom-

panied by Lady Maude Hamilton, and attended by Captain Woodhouse and Mr. Gregory, *aides-de-camp* in waiting.

Colonel Hillier then introduced the officers and men who were to be decorated, *seriatim*, reading a short precis of the particular service which each had rendered, and for which he was about to be honoured. Each man stepped forward, and bowed low before the Marchioness, who gracefully pinned a beautiful silver medal, attached to a broad green ribbon, upon the left breast of his tunic. The following are the names of the officers and men who were thus decorated:—

1. Sub-Inspector Robert Gardiner, in command at Drogheda, who, on the night of the 5th of March, dispersed a large body of armed insurgents, taking many prisoners, and a large quantity of arms and ammunition—a medal.

2. Sub-Inspector Dominick F. Burke, in command at Tallaght on the same night when the Fenian insurgents were defeated, many taken prisoners, and a large quantity of arms and ammunition captured—a medal.

3. Sub-Inspector Oliver Milling, who proceeded on the morning of the 6th of March from Kilfinane to Kilmallock, with a small body of constabulary, to the relief of the party attacked by the Fenians in the police barrack, and with them routed the assailants—a medal.

4. Head Constable Richard Adams, in command of the party surrounded by the Fenians in the barrack at Kilmallock, and who sustained the attack during

several hours, until relieved by Sub-Inspector Milling—£70 from the government, and £50 private subscriptions.

5. Constable James O'Connell, in command of the party who bravely defended their barrack at Castle-martyr, against a large body of armed Fenians, shooting their leader, and putting the assailants to flight—£20 from the government, and £15 private subscriptions.

6. Constable George Forsythe, in command at Ardagh, when an armed body of Fenians attacked, and fired into the barracks, and broke open the door; the constabulary from within returned the fire, wounded one of the assailants, and compelled the whole to fly—a chevron.

7. Constable Patrick Derwan, in command at Emly, when the constabulary resisted the attack of a large body of armed insurgents, who fired into the barrack, and threatened to burn it if not surrendered—a chevron.

8. Constable Martin Scurry, in command at Gurtavoher, when the constabulary repulsed a large body of armed insurgents who had surrounded the barrack, fired into it, and demanded its surrender—a chevron.

9. The ninth was the case of Mounted Constable William Duggan, with which our readers are already familiar, but who was still suffering from the effects of his wounds, and was unable to come to Dublin to receive the medal which had been prepared for him.

The interesting ceremony having concluded, Colonel Hillier stepped forward and 'thanked the Marchioness

of Abercorn for the honour she had conferred upon the force, by thus personally attaching those handsome rewards of gallantry to the individuals who were so fortunate as to receive them from her hands.'

His Excellency then addressed the constabulary ; and few, if any, of the officers or men present anticipated the high honour which was that day to be conferred upon them by command of her most gracious Majesty the Queen, so well had the secret been kept. His Excellency said—'Colonel Hillier, officers, and men of the Irish constabulary, it has given me very great pleasure to be a witness on this occasion, with you all, of the distribution of those rewards of merit, so gallantly earned, and so worthily bestowed. I felt, that given by the hand of Lady Abercorn, they will be more gratifying to those who so well deserve them, than if they were officially conferred by me. I regret to say that one of the men named in the list—I mean police-constable Duggan—is still suffering so much that he is unable to attend upon this occasion, in consequence of injuries he received in the very gallant discharge of his duties. And let me assure you that I consider the rewards have been given for no common service ; you, the brave men who have received them, have each, in your several degrees, whether as officers or constables, rendered no ordinary services to the state. Shut out as you were from any assistance ; depending as you were upon your own courage and determination alone, in numbers infinitesimally less than your opponents, you have shown what an effective triumph loyalty and discipline can accomplish.

I do not exaggerate when I say, that to your courage and determination is owing the successful resistance, in the first instance, of the Fenian insurrection, and the instantaneous collapse which it met subsequently, under the irresistible and admirably organised military power brought against it. You have had the satisfaction of knowing that your services have been specially recognised by both Houses of Parliament, and that even her gracious Majesty herself has not been unmindful of you. You have also the additional gratification of knowing, that while your own individual conduct has been thus appreciated, you have been able to reflect honour on the force to which you belong. I believe that gallant and loyal as was the conduct of those who have received rewards, it was but the reflex of what would have been the conduct of the whole of the Irish constabulary, if a like occasion had called for a display of their devotion. This is not my opinion alone. It is the opinion of a just and gracious sovereign, and I will now proceed to inform you, that as a proof of her Majesty's satisfaction of the conduct of the Irish constabulary, she has been graciously pleased to command that the force shall be hereafter called 'the Royal Irish Constabulary' (applause), and that they shall be entitled to have the harp and crown as badges of the force (applause). Colonel Hillier, in making this announcement, I congratulate most sincerely the Royal Irish Constabulary, both officers and men, on the distinction they have earned, and on the appreciation which they have met with universally throughout the country in the dis-

charge of the very difficult and dangerous duties which devolved upon them' (cheers).

Colonel Hillier then addressing His Excellency, said :—' I am directed by the Inspector-General, Colonel Wood, to express his regret at being unavoidably absent on this occasion—certainly the most interesting in the Royal Irish Constabulary force. Were he present, I am sure he would inform your Excellency, that no reward could be more acceptable to any member of the force—from himself, as Inspector-General, to the youngest recruit on this parade—than that which your Excellency has just announced to us. And further, that the reward itself has been enhanced in value to us, if such were possible, by being communicated by your Excellency, who, as her Majesty's representative, is cognisant of the extent and nature of the services lately rendered. I beg to assure you that your Excellency's words have been listened to by the officers and men on this parade with the greatest interest, and will, I hope, be read in a few hours in every constabulary barrack throughout the land, with feelings of deep loyalty, pride, and gratification' (applause).

The Earl of Mayo then addressed the assembly at great length—more than we would feel justified in transcribing in its entirety, but in the course of his address he said:—

' I assure you it gives me the most intense pleasure to have been permitted to be present this day, and to have heard the eloquent words in which His Excellency has expressed sentiments which, I

believe, are shared in by every loyal man in the Kingdom.

‘Indeed, the honour which has been conferred upon you this day has been conferred in no common manner. It has been conferred in a manner which brings one’s memory back to olden times ; for I believe that, in the days of chivalry and romance, no fairer hands ever attached the badge of loyalty and constancy to the breasts of ancient cavaliers, than those hands which pinned those medals to your breasts to-day. They were attached by one whose many virtues have served through life, to add lustre to an illustrious name. Go on in the course which you have struck out for yourselves, and you will always find that reward heartily accorded to you, which marks the highest approval of your Sovereign, and the gratitude of your country.’ (Applause.)

His lordship’s speech closed the ceremony, and the Viceregal party again entered the equipages in waiting, and returned to the Viceregal Lodge, the band again playing the National Anthem, and ‘the Royal Irish Constabulary’ cheering to the echoes.

A description of this ceremony is given in a green-book, lately issued by desire of the Lord Lieutenant to every constabulary station in Ireland ; and the leading points of it will, therefore, be nothing new to the members of the force. But as we hope that this our history will extend far beyond the limits of the force alone, we have been at the pains to give the information in our own way, looking upon the green-book in question, as ‘an accessory after the fact,’

seeing that we had compiled our incidents before it issued from the press.

A vast number of persons had collected in the barrack yard, to witness the ceremony, amongst whom, as might be expected, were numerous friends of the officers who had been 'decorated,' as well as some others. These were hospitably entertained at a splendid *déjeuné*, and the evening's pleasures closed with an impromptu dance.

We have thus followed what may be called the intricate course of the Irish constabulary, through all its phases, as accurately and, at the same time, as impartially, and (to coin a word) as straightforwardly as possible.

We have dwelt, perhaps, too long upon our subject ; but we have loved to linger upon it, as we have loved to linger, perhaps, too long in the force itself. But its every recollection is associated with the happiest days of our life, and it is not easy to snap the tie that binds us to it still. Until a comparatively late period, we loved it as a profession, whose faithfulness and constancy we would have staked our life upon, as we had done our hopes. There was not a well-conducted man in the force, whom we did not love as a brother ; and now, '*tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis.*' But the time shall come—ah ! it cannot be *very* far distant—when we must take our leave of the force in *fact*, as we now do in *form*, let our memories of it be what they may. But before we go, we hope to see the last great act of justice done to this splendid

body. All that has been said of it in both Houses of Parliament, should not be forgotten or lightly esteemed. Lord Kimberley, who knew the constabulary well, declared in his place in the House of Lords, that 'there was *nothing which they could ask in reason that ought not to be granted to them.*' From one end of the kingdom to the other, even beyond the confines of the kingdom, 'far away and over seas,' their well-earned renown has been wafted to the shores of all our colonies, and over all the Continent. May we not hope that a salutary lesson has been given to those disloyal wretches, whose wicked insurrection has been the cause of evoking the faithfulness and valour of the Royal Irish Constabulary ?





